PR 3516 A1 1822
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
3 1822 01221 0787

3 vols
$150.00

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

FUA-KFE

This Book was supplied by
EDWARD BAKER,
14 & 16, JOHN BRIGHT STREET,
BIRMINGHAM, England.
The most Expert Bookfinder Extant.
Submit your wants.

PR 3516 A1 1822
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
3 1822 01221 0787

PR
3516
.A1
1822
v.1

435-845

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/worksofjohnhomee01homeiala

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN HOME, Esq.

Engd by Ja.s Stewart

JOHN HOME ESQ.R

Engraved from an original Picture in the possession of Sir G Warrender Bar.t

Published by A Constable & Co.ns Edinburgh 1822

John Home.

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN HOME, Esq.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT

OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

BY

HENRY MACKENZIE, Esq. F. R. S. E.
&c. &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH;
AND HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO. LONDON.

1822.

Printed by James Ballantyne and Co. Edinburgh.

TO

THE READER.

THE reader of this Biographical Account may perhaps be surprised to find it now given to the public in the same form as it was originally read to the *Royal Society of Edinburgh.* In truth, there was at that time no intention of publishing it, as I conceived the life of Mr Home, the situation of the friends with whom he was connected, and the circumstances of the time in which he lived, to be so locally peculiar to *Scotland*, that they would not interest readers of the sister kingdom. It was afterwards,

however, strongly urged by some friends, for whose opinion I have great respect, that the literature of this country had now become so much an object of attention to our southern neighbours, that any details relating to it, given by one who had known it almost from its first dawning to the present time, would interest the English nearly, if not quite, as much as the Scots reader. Still, however, diffident of its value in the more formal shape of a book, I chose to give it to the world, under the protection, as it were, of the Society to which it had been read, in the less assuming form in which it was presented to that learned body. I have now another motive for this, which is still more egotistical, and for which, therefore, I am not sure if I can claim the sympathy of the reader. In reviewing these sheets, as they were read to the Royal Society, I feel the melancholy indulgence (natural to my period of life,) of recalling the times and occasions

when they were originally produced;—times and occasions which live in my recollection, associated with the tender remembrance of those literary friends whom I have, alas! survived, but who remain, and, while I live, will remain, hallowed in my sense of their talents and their worth.

CONTENTS.

VOLUME I.

PAGE.

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF MR JOHN HOME 1

Appendix to Biographical Account of Mr John Home, consisting of Letters to and from his Friends 123

DRAMATIC WORKS.

Dedication 185

AGIS 189

DOUGLAS 287

VOLUME II.

SIEGE OF AQUILEIA 1

THE FATAL DISCOVERY 89

ALONZO 179

ALFRED 275

HISTORY OF THE REBELLION, 1745.

Dedication 375

Preface 377

CHAPTER I.

The Subject. Introduction. Extent and Limits of the Highlands of Scotland. Manners of the Highlanders. Clanship. The Highlanders inferior to the Lowlanders in Arms. When and how they became superior. Their Attachment to the Family of Stuart. They take Arms at every Crisis of Public Affairs. Measure suggested to reconcile them to Government. Approved by Sir Robert Walpole. Recommended by him to the Cabinet Council. Rejected by the Cabinet Council. Britain declares War against Spain 383

PAGE.

CHAPTER II.

Conspiracy to restore the Family of Stuart—Engagement to take Arms—Sent to the Old Pretender—Transmitted by him to Cardinal Fleury. War at the Death of Charles VI. Emperor of Germany. The House of Austria attacked—Assisted by Great Britain. Cardinal Fleury sends an Agent to Edinburgh. Plan of Invasion. Death of Cardinal Fleury. Succeeded by Cardinal de Tencin. Charles Stuart arrives at Paris—Goes to Dunkirk. The Troops begin to embark. Design of Invasion frustrated by a Storm. Charles embarks for Scotland—Lands in the Highlands 409

VOLUME III.

CHAPTER III.

Charles at Boradale—His Interview with Lochiel—Resolves to erect his Standard. Commencement of Hostilities. Sir John Cope—His Correspondence with the Secretary of State—Marches towards Fort Augustus. The Rebels take post on his way to the Fort. Sir John changes his Route. The Rebels advance to the Southward. Alarm at Edinburgh—Condition of the City. The Rebels take possession of Perth.—Petition of the Citizens of Edinburgh for Leave to take Arms—The Petition granted. Observations 3

CHAPTER IV.

Preparations to defend the City. Transports sent for General Cope's Army. Notice that the Rebels had left Perth—Their March. Conduct of the Volunteers. The Highlanders advance towards Edinburgh. Retreat of the Dragoons. Consternation in the City. Meeting of the Magistrates and Citizens—Proceedings of the Meeting. Deputation sent to Charles. Notice that the Transports are off Dunbar. Return of the Deputies. Another Deputation sent out. The Deputies ordered to be gone. The Rebels get Possession of the City 38

PAGE.

CHAPTER V.

Charles comes to Holyrood House. His Father proclaimed. The Dragoons join Sir John Cope—His march towards Edinburgh—Receives Information of the Rebels advancing to meet him—Forms his Army to receive the Enemy—The Rebels come in sight. A Morass between the Armies. Various Movements till Night. The Rebels pass the Morass. The Battle of Preston 70

CHAPTER VI.

Charles at Holyrood House—Resolutions of his Council. Contest with General Guest in the Castle. The Rebels reinforced. Some Ships arrive from France. Correspondence of Charles with the Chiefs. Of the Chiefs with one another. Their Engagements to join the Rebel Army. Message by Lord Lovat's Secretary. Embarrassment of Charles and his Council. Resolution and Preparations to March into England. Number of the Rebels when they left Edinburgh . 98

CHAPTER VII.

March of the Rebels towards Carlisle. Carlisle invested. General Wade at Newcastle. Charles marches to Brampton. The Duke of Perth sent back to besiege Carlisle. The Mayor capitulates. The Rebels take possession of the City. Dissension in their Army. Cause of Dissension. The Cause removed. A Council of War. Order sent to Lord Strathallan. March of the Rebels from Carlisle. They arrive at Derby. Council held at Derby. Resolution of the Council to march back. The Retreat begins. The Duke of Cumberland pursues. Skirmish at Clifton. The Rebels continue their march. Cross the Esk, and return to Scotland 117

CHAPTER VIII.

State of Scotland while the Rebel Army was in England. Preparations for War. Head-Quarters of both Armies—Skirmish at Inverury. Number of the Rebels—Contention and Animosity amongst them. Charles marches to Stirling—The Town surrenders. The Rebels besiege the Castle. General Hawley marches to raise the Siege. The two Armies

PAGE.

meet at Falkirk. The King's Army defeated. The Rebels take possession of Falkirk—Tumult and Mutiny in their Army. The Duke of Cumberland arrives at Edinburgh—Marches to attack the Rebels—They retreat to the Highlands. Escape, from the Castle of Downe, of the Volunteers taken Prisoners after the Battle of Falkirk 132

CHAPTER IX.

The Duke of Cumberland pursues the Rebels—Halts at Perth—Sends several Detachments of his Army to different Places. The Prince of Hesse, with a Body of his Troops, escorted by Ships of War, arrives in the Frith of Forth. The Duke of Cumberland comes from Perth to visit the Prince of Hesse. A Council of War at Edinburgh. The Duke of Cumberland returns to Perth—Sends several Regiments to Dundee—Marches himself with the main Body of his Army to Aberdeen—Halts there some time. Charles with a few Men at Moy, near Inverness. An attempt made by Lord Loudon to seize him. The attempt defeated. Charles assembles his Men—Marches to Inverness. Lord Loudon retreats to Ross-shire. Charles besieges the Castle of Inverness. The Castle surrenders. Various Expeditions of the Rebels while the Duke's Army lay at Aberdeen. Account of these Expeditions. An Order from Charles to the Commanding Officers to desist from them, and join him at Inverness 176

CHAPTER X.

The Duke of Cumberland at Aberdeen. His Army leaves Aberdeen—Proceeds towards Inverness. Skirmish at the Bridge of Nairne. The Rear-guard of the Rebels retreats—The Van-guard of the Duke's Army pursues. Charles comes up with a Body of his Troops. The Van-guard of the Duke's Army retreats—Joins their main Body. Design of a Night Attack. Night March of the Rebels. The Design frustrated. The Rebels retreat to Culloden. March of the Duke of Cumberland to attack them. Defeat and Dispersion of the Rebel Army. 197

PAGE.

CHAPTER XI.

Circumstances and Incidents at the Battle of Culloden. Number of the Slain in both Armies. Fate of the Chiefs who commanded the Highland Regiments that attacked the King's Army. Route of Charles when he left the Field—Crosses the River of Nairn—Halts there some time—Goes to Gorthleek—Sees Lord Lovat—Travels through the Highlands to Boradale—Embarks for the Long Island—His Danger and Distress there—Returns to the Main-land—His Distress does not abate—Joins Lochiel and Cluny—Lives with them in the Great Mountain Renalder. Notice comes that two French Frigates are arrived at Boradale. He travels to Boradale—Embarks, and lands in France 222

APPENDIX.

I. Letter from the Old Pretender, addressed to Mr Johnstone, junior, that is, Young Lochiel. April 11th, 1727 . . . 253
II. Letter from Allan Cameron to his Nephew, Young Lochiel. Albano, October 3d, 1729 254
III. Letter from the Old Pretender to one of his Adherents in Scotland. March 11th, 1743 259
IV. Answers to some Queries sent to a Person in Scotland, by the Pretender, or some of the people about him. Edinburgh, January 8th, 1736 262

Correspondence between the Marquis of Tweedale, Secretary of State, and Lord Milton, Justice Clerk, from the first surmise of a Rebellion.

V. Letter from the Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton, Whitehall, July 30th, 1745 265
VI. Lord Milton's Answer. Roseneath, August 4th, 1745 . 269
VII. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Roseneath, August 7th, 1745 269
VIII. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Roseneath, August 10th, 1745 270
IX. Letter—Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, August 13th, 1745 272

PAGE.

X. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale Brunstane, August 20th, 1745 274

XI. Letter from the Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, August 22d, 1745 275

XII. Letter—Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 24th August, 1745 276

XIII. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Brunstane, 29th August, 1745 278

XIV. Letter—Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 29th August, 1745 280

XV. Letter from the Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 3d September, 1745 281

XVI. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Edinburgh, 6th September, 1745 282

XVII. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Edinburgh, 7th September, 1745 284

XVIII. Letter—Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 12th September, 1745 286

XIX. Letter—Lord Milton to the Marquis of Tweedale. Edinburgh, 16th September, 1745 289

XX. Letter from the Marquis of Tweedale to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 21st September, 1745 296

XXI. Letter from the Lord President to Sir Alexander Macdonald. Culloden, 19th August, 19th August, 1745 . . . 298

XXII. Letter from the Lord President to Sir John Cope. Culloden, 20th August, 1745 301

XXIII. Letter—Sir John Cope to Lord Milton. From the Camp at Inverness, 31st August, 1745 305

XXIV. Letter—Lord Milton to Mr Maule, afterwards Baron Maule. Edinburgh, Sept. 6th, 1745 306

XXV. Letter—General Guest to Lord Milton. Thursday Morning 307

XXVI. Letter—Lord Milton to Sir John Cope. Edinburgh, 5th September, 1745 307

XXVII. Letter concerning the Arms of the Highlanders, dated Kilmuir, in the Isle of Skye 309

XXVIII. Instructions for Mr Alexander Macleod, Advocate . 310

XXIX. Letter from Fraser of Foyers to the Duke of Athole. October 9th, 1745 313

PAGE.

XXX. Queries sent to Mr Patullo, with his Answers.—Patullo had been Muster-master of the Rebel army, in the Year 1745, and had lived in Exile at Paris many years . . . 314

XXXI. Letter from Lord Milton to the Duke of Argyll, at London. Edinburgh, 21st November, 1745 318

XXXII. John Hay's Account of the Retreat of the Rebels from Derby 321

XXXIII. Queries sent to Charles at Rome, called there the Count of Albany, with his Answer 223

XXXIV. Letter from Macpherson of Cluny to one of his Friends in Scotland. Carlisle, 20th December, 1745 . . 325

XXXV. Letter—Lord John Drummond to Lord Fortrose. Perth, 6th December, 1745 327

XXXVI. Letter from the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Milton. Whitehall, 14th December, 1745 329

XXXVII. Letter from the Duke of Newcastle to the Lord President. Whitehall, 11th January, 1746 332

XXXVIII. Letter—Lord Milton to General Hawley. Edinburgh, Jan. 26th, 1746 334

XXXIX. Address from the Chiefs to Charles, after the Battle of Falkirk, advising a Retreat to the North. Falkirk, 29th January, 1746 335

XL. John Hay's Account of the Retreat from Stirling . . 338

XLI. Letter—Secretary Murray to Cameron of Lochiel. Fort Augustus, 14th March, 1746 839

XLII. Copy Letter—Lord George Murray, calling himself De Vallignie, to Mr William Hamilton, Esq. of Bangour. Emmerick, 5th August, 1749 342

XLIII. John Hay's Account of the Retreat after the Night March to attack the Duke's Army at Nairn 355

XLIV. Answer by Charles, called the Count of Albany, at Rome 357

XLV. Narrative of Flora Macdonald, giving an Account of her Interviews with Charles, in the Long Island, and the Manner in which she conducted him to the Isle of Skye . 358

XLVI. Cluny's Account of Lochiel and himself, after the Battle of Culloden; of their meeting with Charles; and the extraordinary Habitation called the Cage, where Charles

PAGE.

lived with them, till he received notice that two French Frigates were arrived at Lochnanuagh 362

XLVII. Resolutions by the Rebel Chiefs, after the Battle of Culloden. Muirlaggan, 8th May, 1746 369

XLVIII. Letter from Lochiel to Cluny. Locharkaik, 13th May, 1746 373

XLIX. Letter—Secretary Murray to Macpherson of Cluny. Invermeley, 19th May, 1746 374

L. Letter from Lochiel to some of the Chiefs, who had agreed to take arms. 25th May, 1746 375

LI. Extracts from his Majesty's State Papers, relative to Scotland, in the Year 1745-6 377

ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF MR JOHN HOME.*

THE biography of literary men is generally little more than a chronological account of their works, with a few private anecdotes, which, except being connected with, and, as it were, ennobled by their works, it could not be an object to record. But with that connection in their favour, the else unvalued circumstances of their lives acquire an interest with the reader proportionate to that which the writings of the author have excited; and we are anxious to know every little occurrence which befel him who was giving, at the period when these occurrences took place, the product of his mind to the public. We are anxious to know how the world treated the man who was labouring for its instruction or amusement, as well as the effect

* Read at the Royal Society, on Monday, 22d June 1812.

which his private circumstances had on his literary productions, or the complexion, as one may term it, which those productions borrowed from the incidents of his life.

The above considerations afford an apology for the narratives of the comparatively unimportant occupations which the world peruses with so much attention and interest; they help that personification of an author which the reader of his work so naturally indulges; and if they sometimes put that reader right in his estimate of the influence of genius or feeling upon conduct, they serve at the same time as a moral lesson on the subject, and mark, as it were, one of the unexpected shores or islands, sometimes it may be rocks or quicksands, on the chart of life.

The subject of the Memoir which I now take the liberty of laying before the Society, is somewhat more entitled to notice than the common biography of mere literary men, from the peculiar circumstances in which the person of whom it treats was placed; and more particularly as he began to write in the dawn of that period of literary eminence which our countrymen have so much illustrated, and was extremely intimate with most of those men to whom Scotland owes so much of its reputation in the world of letters.

It is on this ground chiefly that I venture to submit it to the Society, not as a thing of any va-

lue in itself, but as borrowing some estimation from the era of which it speaks, and the names which that era introduces to their notice. It is only with reference to this sort of chronicle that it pretends to claim your attention, and that he who reads it could now pretend to make it worthy of your hearing. That waning age, and often interrupted health, which have so long delayed its production, even in a very imperfect state, have blunted, he is well aware, those powers which the world were kindly disposed to estimate, more from their application and tendency than from their intrinsic worth.

The first favoured lot of age is to retain its powers undecayed; the next is his who is sensible of their decay, and diffident of their exertions. The Society will pardon this little digression of egotism in one who will never probably be heard by it again in the first person, and who scarce presumes to expect that any partial friends will deem him of importance enough to recal him to its remembrance in the third.

JOHN HOME, of whose life I am to read the following sketch, was born at Leith, on the 22d day of September, 1722, O. S. He was the son of Mr Alexander Home, town-clerk of Leith, and Mrs Christian Hay, daughter of Mr John Hay, writer in Edinburgh, of a respectable family in the north

of Scotland. His father was a son of Mr Home of Flass, in the county of Berwick, a lineal descendant of Sir James Home of Cowdenknows, ancestor of the present Earl of Home.

Mr Home (according to the narrative, for which I am indebted to an intimate friend and relation of his) was educated at the Grammar School of Leith, and the University of Edinburgh. In both these seminaries he prosecuted his studies with remarkable diligence and success. While he attended the University, his talents, his progress in literature, and his peculiarly agreeable manners, soon excited the attention, and procured him in no small degree the favour, both of the professors and of his fellow students. At this early period of life he entered into strict bonds of friendship with the late Drs Robertson, Blair, Drysdale, and several others, of whom I shall, in a subsequent part of this Memoir, give a more particular account.

As he was educated with a view to obtain a situation as a minister of the Church of Scotland, his studies were, of course, for some time principally calculated to qualify him for the performance of the several duties incumbent on a clergyman. His character as a zealous and accomplished student, became in a few years very conspicuous. After passing, with much approbation, through the various trials, which candidates for acquiring the station of *probationers* for the ministry are required

to undergo, he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Edinburgh on the 4th day of April 1745, O. S.

His sincere attachment to the ecclesiastical and civil constitution of his country was, with his usual warmth and openness of mind, displayed in some of his early appearances in the pulpit.

The progress of his professional studies and occupations was interrupted by the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1745. This furnished an occasion for that military ardour, that chivalrous spirit, which his natural temperament and favourite course of reading had produced and fostered. He took the side of whiggism, as whiggism was then understood, and freedom, as British freedom was then conceived, and became a volunteer in a loyal corps, which was formed in Edinburgh with the original purpose of defending that city from the attack of the rebels, of which he has given a full account in his History of that Rebellion. In this corps he served at the unfortunate battle of *Falkirk*, and, after the defeat, was taken prisoner along with some others of his fellow volunteers, and committed to the Castle of *Doune* in Perthshire, from which the party contrived to escape by cutting their bed-clothes into ropes, and letting themselves down from the window of the room in which they were confined. One of their number (Mr Bar-

row,* a young English student, then in Edinburgh, an early and intimate acquaintance of Mr Home's) broke his leg in the descent; but Mr Home escaped unhurt, and, eluding the vigilance of the Jacobite party, who, in truth, were neither very active nor rigid in their measures of precaution or of resentment, took up his residence for some time with his relations at Leith, and applied himself to that sort of study which his intended clerical profession required, but always mixed, if not interrupted, by the kind of reading to which his inclination led, that of the historians and classics of Greece and Rome.

His temper was of that warm susceptible kind which is caught with the heroic and the tender, and which is more fitted to delight in the world of sentiment than to succeed in the bustle of ordinary life. This is a disposition of mind well suited to the poetical character, and, accordingly, all his earliest companions agree that Mr Home was from his childhood delighted with the lofty and heroic ideas which embody themselves in the description or narrative of poetry. One of them, nearly a coëval of Mr Home's, our respected and venerable colleague Dr A. Ferguson, says, in a letter to me, that Mr Home's

* Mr Barrow was the "*Genial Youth*" mentioned in Collins's Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands.

favourite model of a character, on which, indeed, his own was formed, was that of Young *Norval*, in his tragedy of *Douglas*, one endowed with chivalrous valour and romantic generosity, eager for glory beyond every other object, and, in the contemplation of future fame, entirely regardless of the present objects of interest or ambition. It was upon this ideal model of excellence that Mr Home's own character was formed, and the same glowing complexion of mind which gave it birth, coloured the sentiments and descriptions of his ordinary discourse; he had a very retentive memory, and was fond of recalling the incidents of past times, and of dramatizing his stories by introducing the names and characters of the persons concerned in them. The same turn of mind threw a certain degree of elevation into his language, and heightened the narrative in which that language was employed; he spoke of himself with a frankness which a man of that disposition is apt to indulge, but with which he sometimes forgot that his audience was not always inclined to sympathize, and thence he was accused of more vanity than in truth belonged to his character. The same warm colouring was employed in the delineation of his friends, to whom, in his estimation, he assigned a rank which others did not always allow. So far did he carry this propensity, that, as Dr Robertson used jokingly to say, he invested them with a sort of supernatural

privilege above the ordinary humiliating circumstances of mortality. "He never (said the Doctor) would allow that a friend was sick till he heard of his death." To the same source might be traced the warm eulogium which he was accustomed to bestow on them. "He delighted in bestowing as well as in receiving what is generally termed flattery, (says another of his intimates,) but with him it had all the openness and warmth of truth. He flattered all of us from whom his flattery could gain no favour, fully as much, or, indeed, more willingly, than he did those men of the first consequence and rank with whom the circumstances of his future life associated him, and he received any praise from us with the same genuine feelings of friendship and attachment." There was no false coinage in this currency which he used in his friendly intercourse; whether given or received, it had with him the stamp of perfect candour and sincerity.

Those companions at this early period of his youth were chiefly found among young men employed in the same studies, and destined for the same profession with himself, that of the Church of Scotland.

The clergy of Scotland were at that time one of the most respectable as well as happy orders of the people. With the advantages always of a classical, and sometimes of a polite education, their knowledge was equal or superior to that of any man in their parish. Their influence in those times, be-

fore a number of different sectaries had withdrawn themselves from the established church, was great and universal, and their incomes, taken with reference to the value of money, the state of manners, and style of living at that period, were much more adequate to all the purposes of comfort and decent appearance than their stipends of the present day, after all the augmentations which have been granted them. At that period, when the value of land was low, when the proprietors of a parish lived more at home, when there were fewer outlets for their younger sons, and when those younger sons did not so often as they now do bring back great wealth, its attendant pretensions and its attendant luxuries, to their native districts, the clergyman of the parish stood high in the scale of rank among his parishioners, and, as I well remember, was able to maintain a certain style of plain and cordial hospitality, which gave him all the advantages of rational gentleman-like society. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland gave its clergy an opportunity of occasional visits to the metropolis, and of a situation in that truly popular assembly which brought them to a level, and mixed them for a time, with gentlemen of the first rank and respectability in the country. In point of weight and consideration, and, indeed, in the exertion of talent, particularly in that of oratory, they had this obvious advantage over the lay members of that

assembly, that the subjects were chiefly clerical, lying more within the range of their accustomed studies, as well as more within the reach of their particular information, than could be the case with the laymen who sat there along with them. The clergy of Edinburgh, coming thither thus prepared by education and habit, for filling a respectable place in society, found in that city a circle well adapted to perfect their knowledge, to enlarge their minds, and to foster their genius. They mixed more than, I think, they have done at any subsequent period, with the first and most distinguished persons of the place, distinguished, whether for science, literature, or polite manners, and even, as far as the clerical character might innocently allow, with the men of fashion conspicuous for wit and gaiety. In the inexpensive style of the Edinburgh society, at the period to which I allude, when *tea* was the meal of ceremony for general acquaintance, and a supper of a very moderate number that of more intimate society, there was much more intercourse of mind than in the large parties of modern times, which form, in truth, a sort of public place in a private house. In such places of numerous resort, even if other circumstances allowed, the clergy cannot so easily mix with those who are styled people of fashion. I regret the want of mixture of clerical and lay society for the sake of both parties. To the one it tended to add the

graces of manner to the solid talents which at all times so many of them possess. To the other it tended to give that very solidity, soberness, and modesty of demeanour, so useful and so amiable in the young of either sex. It tended to give to wealth and rank, instead of the insolence and frivolity which often accompany them, the urbanity, the condescension, the chastened wit, the decent deportment, which are the great sweeteners, as well as ennoblers, of social life. It added respect and dignity to both parties, and mixed into a closer and more advantageous union, the different classes of men. It checked the petulance of the young, and smoothed the severity of the old; it added sentiment to the gaieties, and gave more winning features to the serious duties, of life.

There was, indeed, a high Calvinistic party in the church, whose rigid ideas of the clerical function were somewhat unfriendly to social intercourse, or the ease of social enjoyment. But they were often men of great learning and talents, and they had their reward in the authority and popular weight which they obtained among the bulk of their parishioners. The party opposite to them, who were less rigid and severe in their ideas of clerical manners and character, owed, perhaps, to that very distinction a politeness and suavity of deportment, and an attention to accomplishment and elegance in their studies, to which otherwise their si-

tuation might not have led. They cultivated classical literature, and began that study of refined composition which some of them afterwards carried to such a degree of excellence in this country.

Of this party was Mr John Home, who was early associated with his coëvals destined for the church, of similar inclinations and dispositions. Besides the eminent persons above-mentioned, Robertson, Hugh Blair, and Drysdale, he became intimately associated with others of his fellow-churchmen, whose disposition, as well as talents, were calculated to combine with and to foster his own. Among these were Drs Cleghorn, Carlyle, Adam Ferguson, Ballantyne, and Logan.* The last of these was peculiarly distinguished for learning and acuteness, and was generally allowed to be the first metaphysician of his time. This quality tended to draw upon him a certain suspicion of heterodoxy; and Dr Carlyle used to mention, that once having lent Dr Logan a sermon, when he was unexpectedly called to preach before the Presbytery of Dalkeith, that reverend body believing it to be Logan's own, found, or conceived themselves to find, so much sceptical metaphysics in it, as to be

* Not the clergyman of that name, the poet of a later time, but another clergyman, coeval with Mr Home, who died before the younger Logan was known as an author.

with difficulty prevented from instituting a prosecution against the preacher.

I have prepared the Society for this paper being a paper of parentheses—a sort of *literary gossip's story*. Will they indulge me in a somewhat *long*, and, perhaps, it may be thought still more *tedious* than long, parenthesis on the situation and character of some of Mr Home's early companions, whose names and memories they may not be unwilling, however, to recal, as the fathers and fosterers of that literary and philosophical spirit to which this Society owes its origin and station?

It were impertinent in me to do any more than merely to name those illustrious men whose biography has been already in much abler hands, Drs Robertson and Blair, and David Hume, nor need I speak of our venerable colleague, Dr A. Ferguson, whose life, as well as his works, are so well known to the world. Others there were of less note, who have not been handed down by their literary labours to posterity, but who were, perhaps, little inferior either in genius or learning to their more celebrated companions, and to whom those companions were indebted, not only for a great part of the happiness of their lives, but more, perhaps, than can ever be known, for many suggestions, for the original germ of many ideas, which they afterwards expanded or adorned in the volumes which they gave to the world. At that

time the press was a vehicle not so immediately resorted to for the communication of opinion or of theory as it now is. Men were then shyer of coming forth to public notice as authors, and were apt to content themselves with the conscious possession of talents or of learning, or the participation of those endowments with the circle of such of their friends as were qualified to appreciate them.

Among these were the clergymen Ballantyne, Logan, Carlyle, and Drysdale, whom I have mentioned above; and, at a later period, General Fletcher, who was one of Mr Home's most intimate and constant companions, a man of a very elegant appearance, and a scholar more deeply read than men in his situation commonly are. Mr John Jardine, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, was another of that circle, the coëval and intimate companion of Mr Home, a man of infinite pleasantry as well as great talents, whose conversation, perhaps, beyond that of any other of the set, possessed the charm of easy natural attractive humour. His playful vivacity often amused itself in a sort of mock contest with the infantile (if I may use such a phrase when speaking of such a man) simplicity of David Hume, who himself enjoyed the discovery of the joke which had before excited the laugh of his companions around him. Another member of that society, while he lived in

the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, was Wilkie, author of the Epigoniad, a poem now but little read or known, yet certainly of great merit, not only as possessing much of the spirit and manner of Homer, of whom its author was an enthusiastic admirer, but also a manly and vigorous style of poetry, rarely found in modern compositions of the kind. Of Wilkie all the party spoke as superior in original genius to any man of his time, but rough and unpolished in his manners, and still less accommodating to the decorum of society in the ordinary habits of his life. Charles Townsend, a very competent judge of men, and who, both as a politician and a man of the world, was fond of judging them, said, after being introduced to Wilkie, and spending a day with him at Dr Carlyle's, that he had never met with a man who approached so near to the two extremes of a god and a brute as Dr Wilkie.

It might surprise us to find how much Wilkie, with all his vigour of mind, his powers of expression, and shrewdness of observation, has failed in the Moral Fables which he published some time after his Epigoniad, did we not know how much poetry requires feeling, as well as knowledge and fancy, a quality which Wilkie did not much possess. To poetical excellence, perhaps, even a degree of nervous sensibility, bordering on weakness, is often favourable; the poetical talent is favoured, at

least, by that pliability of imagination which identifies itself with the character, with the passion, with the scene, which it delineates; it goes out of the man's self, as it were, to assume such character and passion, to lose its own actual situation in such a scene. Hence, too, one can easily account for what has appeared strange to some, (and the wonder is, perhaps, a compliment to those who think it strange,) namely, the highly virtuous poetry, or works of imagination akin to poetry, of men whose conduct was so little actuated by virtue.

It is, perhaps, to a want of this poetical sensibility that we may chiefly impute the inferior degree of interest excited by Wilkie's Epigoniad, to that which its merits in other respects might excite. Perhaps it suffers also from its author having the Homeric imitation constantly in view, in which, however, he must be allowed, I think, to have been very successful,—so successful that a person, ignorant of Greek, will, I believe, better conceive what Homer is in the original by perusing the Epigoniad, than by reading even the excellent translation of Pope.

Of this groupe of men, with whom, as I have said, Mr John Home was associated, was Dr Wallace, another minister of Edinburgh, known as an author by his Treatise on the Numbers of Mankind, who cultivated the science of political economy before it had begun to be studied here under those great

masters, David Hume, and his friend, Adam Smith. Dr Wallace, with the most perfect correctness of clerical character, was a man of the world in that better sense of the term, which implies a knowledge of whatever human science or learning has done to enlighten mankind; and he even extended his reading to its innocent though lighter accomplishments. He wrote Notes, as his son informs us, on "Gallini's Treatise on Dancing." I sat with my father's family in the Little Church, (called Haddo's Hold, from its having been once used as a prison for Lord Haddo, in the days of civil contention in Scotland,) where Dr Wallace was minister; and I perfectly remember his introducing in a sermon, comparing modern morals, manners, and attainments, with those of the ancients, a high encomium on "Gray's Elegy on a Country Church Yard," which had been published a short while before, which he said he would venture to compare with the most celebrated specimens of ancient classic poetry. *

* "An anecdote, told by the late Professor Robison, (as mentioned in his Life, read by the late Professor Playfair to this Society,) deserves well to be remembered. Professor Robison, then employed as an engineer in the army commanded by General Wolfe, happened to be on duty in the boat in which the General went to visit some of his posts, the night before the battle, which was expected to be decisive of the fate of the campaign. The evening was fine, and the scene, considering the work they were engaged in, and the

The opposite party in church politics had also their economist and arithmetician, Dr Alexander Webster, who, from his talents in those departments, arranged, if not originated, the Corporation of the *Widows' Fund*, destined to support the widows and orphans of the Scots clergy, an institution the most useful as well as prosperous of any of the kind in Europe. Drs Dick and Peter Cumming were likewise very eminent among that party for talents and learning. Dick was of that high unbending mind, which was better fitted for public exhibitions of eloquence than for the level of ordinary conversation; but Dr Webster and P. Cumming possessed a degree of natural humour and pleasantry equal to those of any men with whom my youthful days had the pleasure of being associated.

Of George Wishart, minister of Edinburgh, and another of what was termed the moderate party, the figure is before me at this moment. It is possible some of the Society who hear me may remember him. Without the advantage of that circum-

---

morning to which they were looking forward, sufficiently impressive. As they rowed along, the General, with much feeling, repeated nearly the whole of Gray's Elegy (which had appeared not long before, and was yet but little known) to an officer who sat with him in the stern of the boat; adding, as he concluded, that 'he would prefer being the author of that poem to the glory of beating the French to-morrow.'" —*Playfair's Works, Life of Robison*, vol. IV. p. 126-7.

stance, I can faintly describe his sainted countenance—that physiognomy so truly expressive of Christian meekness, yet, in the pulpit, often lighted up with the warmest devotional feeling. In the midst of his family society—a numerous and amiable one—it beamed with so much patriarchal affection and benignity, so much of native politeness, graced with those manners which improve its form, without weakening its substance, that I think a painter of the *Apostolic School could have no where found a more perfect model.

The lay members of this circle, with whom Mr Home spent much of his time, were not less eminent for talents than amiable in manners; Lord Elibank, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, Mr Baron Mure, and Mr Johnston, afterwards Sir William Pulteney. Lord Elibank was, in conversation, much beyond any of those his companions. His wit was of the most brilliant, yet, at the same time, of the most natural kind. His knowledge of books was various and extensive, and his memory of what he read surprisingly accurate as well as retentive. His remarks both on books and men were not less conspicuous for originality than discernment.

---

* I am aware that there is no such school technically so called; but I shall be easily understood to mean that class of painters whose subjects led them so often to exhibit the sainted countenances of our Saviour and his disciples.

But the most illustrious of that circle was David Hume, who had a sincere affection for his poetical namesake,—an affection which was never abated during the life of that celebrated man. The unfortunate nature of his opinions with regard to the theoretical principles of moral and religious truth, never influenced his regard for men who held very opposite sentiments on those subjects—subjects which he never, like some vain and shallow sceptics, introduced into social discourse; on the contrary, when at any time the conversation tended that way, he was desirous rather of avoiding any serious discussion on matters which he wished to confine to the graver and less dangerous consideration of cool philosophy. He had, it might be said, in the language which the Grecian historian applies to an illustrious Roman, two minds; one which indulged in the metaphysical scepticism which his genius could invent, but which it could not always disentangle; another, simple, natural, and playful, which made his conversation delightful to his friends, and even frequently conciliated men whose principles of belief his philosophical doubts, if they had not power to shake, had grieved and offended. During the latter period of his life I was frequently in his company amidst persons of genuine piety, and I never heard him venture a remark at which such men, or ladies—still more susceptible than men—could take offence.

His good nature and benevolence prevented such an injury to his hearers; it was unfortunate that he often forgot what injury some of his writings might do to his readers. The sentiments which such good nature and benevolence might suggest, I ventured to embody, in a sort of dramatic form, in the story of La Roche in the Mirror, in which Mr Hume is made to say, "That there were times when, recollecting that venerable pastor and his lovely daughter, he forgot the pride of literary fame, and wished that he had never doubted." It will not, I hope, be an offensive egotism, if I inform the Society, that, when I wrote that story, being anxious there should not be a single expression in it that could give offence or uneasiness to any friend of Mr Hume's, I read it to Dr Adam Smith, and begged that he would tell me if any thing should be left out or altered. He heard it attentively, and declared he did not find a syllable to object to; but added, with his characteristic absence of mind, that he was surprised he had never heard of the anecdote before.

In the same *bonhommie*, Mr Hume bore with perfect good nature the pleasantries which humorous deductions from his theoretical scepticism sometimes produced. Once, I have been told, he was in a small degree ruffled by a witticism of Mr John Home's, who, though always pleasant, and often lively, seldom produced what might be term-

ed or repeated as wit. The clerk of an eminent banker in Edinburgh, a young man of irreproachable conduct, and much in the confidence of his master, eloped with a considerable sum with which he had been entrusted. The circumstance was mentioned at a dinner where the two Humes, the historian and the poet, and several of their usual friendly circle, were present. David Hume spoke of it as a kind of moral problem, and wondered what could induce a man of such character and habits as this clerk was said to possess, thus to incur, for an inconsiderable sum, the guilt and the infamy of such a transaction. "I can easily account for it," said his friend John Home, "from the nature of his studies, and the kind of books which he was in the habit of reading." "What were they?" said the philosopher. "Boston's Fourfold State," rejoined the poet, "and Hume's Essays." David was more hurt by the joke than was usual with him, probably from the singular conjunction of the two works, which formed, according to his friend's account, the library of the unfortunate young man.

Such was the free and cordial communication of sentiments, the natural play of fancy and good humour, which prevailed among the circle of men whom I have described. It was very different from that display of learning—that prize-fighting of wit, which distinguished a literary circle of our

sister country, of which we have some authentic and curious records. There all ease of intercourse was changed for the pride of victory; and the victors, like some savage combatants, gave no quarter to the vanquished. This may, perhaps, be accounted for more from the situation than the dispositions of the principal members of that society. The literary circle of London was a sort of sect, a *caste* separate from the ordinary professions and habits of common life. They were traders in talent and learning, and brought, like other traders, samples of their goods into company, with a jealousy of competition which prevented their enjoying, as much as otherwise they might, any excellence in their competitors.

The learned and ingenious men whom I have just mentioned, were the principal founders of the society established in Edinburgh under the denomination of the *Select Society*, of which Mr Stewart has given a list in his Life of Dr Robertson. That list, according to the information of a member, is not quite complete. Among other names omitted, may be mentioned those of the Duke of Hamilton, a man, not only of elegant manners, but of classical acquirements; but careless and dissipated in the highest degree; Lord Dalmeny, cut off, like the duke, in the prime of life, though very different in the temperance of its habits. Mr Robert Alexander was also a zealous member of that so-

ciety; a very worthy, intelligent, and accomplished man, but plain and awkward in his person, and devoid of that readiness of thought and command of expression which might qualify him for a speaker. "But his suppers," says my authority, "were delightful, formed on the model of Paris, where Mr A. had occasion frequently to be; they were elegant and enjoués, frequented by all the literary, and most of the fashionable, persons of the time. By those meetings (continued he) some of the most distinguished members of the Select Society were more improved than by the debates at its sittings. Those meetings of easy but improving sociality rubbed off the corners of mere learning and science, and thus made the literati of Edinburgh less captious and less pedantic than those of any other place."

About this time (1755) was produced a periodical publication, which attracted less notice at the time than it has since excited, when its principal authors had attained such celebrity as to make the world anxious to know the smallest of their productions,—I mean the Original *Edinburgh Review*, of which only two numbers were published; the article by Adam Smith, a Criticism on Johnson's Dictionary, was very conspicuous.

David Hume was not among the number of the writers of the Review, though we should have thought he would have been the first person whose

co-operation they would have sought. But I think I have heard that they were afraid both of his extreme good nature, and his extreme artlessness; that, from the one, their criticisms would have been weakened, or suppressed, and, from the other, their secret discovered. The merits of the work strongly attracted his attention, and he expressed his surprise, to some of the gentlemen concerned in it, with whom he was daily in the habit of meeting, at the excellence of a performance written, as he presumed, from his ignorance on the subject, by some persons out of their own literary circle. It was agreed to communicate the secret to him at a dinner, which was shortly after given by one of their number. At that dinner he repeated his wonder on the subject of the Edinburgh Review. One of the company said he knew the authors, and would tell them to Mr Hume upon his giving an oath of secrecy. "How is the oath to be taken," said David, with his usual pleasantry, "of a man accused of so much scepticism as I am? You would not trust my Bible Oath; but I will swear by the το καλον and the το πρεπον never to reveal your secret." He was then told the names of the authors and the plan of the work, but it was not continued long enough to allow of his contributing any articles. Of another work, and one of much humour, written by Adam Ferguson, in ridicule of the opposers of a Scots militia, "The History of Sister Peg," Da-

vid Hume was also kept in ignorance, from similar motives, by his literary friends. By way of a pleasant revenge for their want of confidence, David Hume wrote a letter to the publisher, assuming the work to himself, and accounting for his having till that time declined avowing it. I have seen this letter, and it is written in such a style, as, to a man not informed of the real circumstances of the case, would leave no doubt of Mr Hume's being the author of the book. I could not read this letter without being confirmed in an observation which I have often ventured to make, on the uncertainty of the evidence arising from *letters*, when the writers are dead, and the motives of their correspondence cannot be known.

The mention of *Sister Peg* leads me to take notice of another literary association, considerably later than the *Select Society*, established under the auspices of some of Mr Home's above-mentioned companions, and in conformity to his own sanguine ideas of national pride and heroism ; this was the *Poker Club*, instituted in 1762, at a time when Scotland was refused a militia, and thought herself affronted by the refusal ; a refusal which many sensible and moderate men thought for her advantage, as she was just then beginning that course of improvement in industry, and particularly in agriculture, which she has since so successfully prosecuted ; but, perhaps, chiefly caused by that jealousy, which

fifteen years had not yet extinguished, of a disaffected spirit of Jacobitism, which made it unsafe to trust the people of Scotland, or at least a great part of them, with arms. The name of this club, the *Poker*, was chosen from a quaint sort of allusion to the principles it was originally meant to excite, as a club to stir up the fire and spirit of the country. It was afterwards extended as to members, though less definite in its objects, by the admission of a number of gentlemen of this country, and chiefly resident in Edinburgh, considerable either in rank and station, or eminent for talents. At its first institution, Mr Johnston, afterwards Sir William Pulteney, was chosen Secretary, with two assistants, for the revisal of any publications that might be thought necessary; and, in a playful moment, Mr Andrew Crosbie, the celebrated barrister, (one of the most zealous advocates for the people, and one of the warmest asserters of their freedom, but the best-natured and gentlest man possible in private life,) was chosen *Assassin*, in case that office should be found necessary, with another more celebrated man, equally remarkable for the mildness of his disposition, Mr David Hume, for his assistant. I see among these careless scraps of his earlier writings, which Mr Hume had preserved, the beginning of a warm paper addressed to the landed gentlemen of Scotland, on the subject of the militia, ascribing to the want of it

the early misfortunes of the Seven Years' War, to which the subsequent successes, unparalleled in British history, afforded a sufficient answer. The club flourished till 1784, when its members, according to a list I have seen, were in number sixty-six, consisting, among other literary men, of several whom I have mentioned above, of Patrick Lord Elibank, Sir John Dalrymple, Sir James Stewart, Dr Adam Smith, Drs Cullen, Black, and Gregory, and Professor James Russel. Of men that were afterwards eminent in public life, were Lord Melville, Sir Gilbert Elliot, his brother Admiral Elliot, and Sir Robert Murray Keith. Of men of fashion, who, in those days, were proud of connection and acquaintance with men of letters, were the Duke of Buccleuch, the Marquis of Grahame, afterwards Duke of Montrose, Lord Mountstewart, afterwards Earl of Bute, the Earls of Haddington, Glencairn, and Glasgow, Lord Binning, Sir Adam Ferguson, and Sir John Halkett.

Excellent as, from the above enumeration, the Society of Edinburgh will be allowed, at that period, to have been, yet old Ambassador Keith, who returned to his native city after an absence of twenty-two years, complained (perhaps with an old man's partiality) that it had lost some of that high polish and general information of which he remembered it possessed. In his younger days, he said,

every Scots gentleman, of L.300 a-year, made it a necessary part of education to travel for two or three years abroad, when, having previously acquired sufficient learning and information to point out their objects of inquiry, and to lay the foundation for future acquirements, and not being rich enough for the indulgence of the idleness, the follies, or the profligacy which are often produced or fostered by wealth, the gentlemen of Scotland improved in manners and in fashion, and gained that knowledge of the world and enlargement of mind, which made their society afterwards so delightful at home. "They were qualified," says my authority, "for conversation and study, while they cultivated their paternal fields. Sportsmen and farmers, without being able to talk of nothing else than the pedigree of horses, the breed of bullocks, or the qualities of manure." The elder Keith, whose opinion I have just quoted, became, at that advanced age, a member of the Poker Club, with which he frequently associated. Lord Elliock was a constant attendant; an excellent scholar, of the most singularly retentive memory, particularly for anecdotes, with a great store of which his long residence abroad had furnished him. When in Holland, he had the good fortune to be intimately known, and often in the society of Frederick the Great, whom the jealousy of his father, then King of Prussia, had banished at that time from his native country.

I hope I have not trespassed too far on the patience of the Society, in this account of Mr Home's companions and associates. Young men speak from feeling, old men from memory. I am aware that the memory of old men is apt to be tiresome, from the length and minuteness of its details; it is only interesting to others, in proportion as it travels over important events, or among eminent men. I know also, that the narrator is often deceived as to the interest of his narrative. The sun-set of life, like that of the natural day, throws a golden gleam on the objects of our recollection, which brightens them to our view much beyond the appearance which they wear when clothed in soberer colours; but the narrative, like the landscape, draws some advantage, with susceptible minds, from the tint which is thus thrown upon it, though they may be aware that it is illumined somewhat beyond the colouring of truth.

Such companions and associates as I have mentioned naturally encouraged Mr Home's love of letters, and his ardour for poetry. But, besides this excitement, he had from nature, or a very early education, received a turn of mind, or imbibed sentiments and habits, very favourable to the poetical spirit. Notice has been already taken of that admiration of the chivalrous character, of ardent valour, and of military fame, which Mr Ferguson states as one of his marked early propensities, per-

sonified in his character of Young Douglas. His favourite reading was of a kind to inflame the imagination, and to dramatize, as it were, the passions. Plutarch was the author constantly in his hands. The spirit with which he read this historian may be judged by the opening of an Essay he had begun to write on the character of the Gracchi. "I hope," says he, in detailing his motives for writing it, "that the freemen of Great Britain will read Plutarch, and my reflections upon his narrative, with the same passion and pleasure that I think and write; and while they contemplate and admire the actions of those great men, be inspired with that spirit of liberty which was so strong in them."

Mr Home's favourite amusement was angling—one that seems to me peculiarly adapted to nourish poetical feeling, and to inspire poetical enthusiasm. The romantic scenery which surrounds the angler—the quiet and solitude to which his art necessarily leads—the pauses which the *contemplative angler* (as Walton calls him) frequently indulges—that repose of the soul which Rousseau has so enchantingly described, which lets sleep the severer faculties and powers, but wakes the fancy and the heart;—all these concomitants of this amusement are the natural food of poetry. From the usual scenes of this diversion Mr Home has borrowed an expression, which, though somewhat bold, and therefore made a subject of ridicule to the soberer

critic, any man who has listened to the rippling of a brook, in the stillness of noon, or in the silence of a summer evening, will immediately acknowledge to be just:

> "The river, coursing o'er its pebbly bed,
> Imposes silence with a stilly sound."

Mr Home's classical reading was such as to bend his mind to that heroic sentiment of which I have taken notice above, the swell of which is one of the nurses of poetry. He had written an Essay, of which I have seen considerable detached pieces, on the Character of Cornelius and Sempronius Gracchus, of Cleomenes and Agis, and the Republican Form of Government, of which, like most young men of ardent minds, he was at that time a great admirer. From the perusal of Plutarch, he had early conceived the idea of writing a tragedy on the subject of the death of Agis, as related by that biographer, and had completed the first copy of it soon after he was settled as minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian, which was in the year 1746. To that church he was presented by the patron, Mr Kinloch, afterwards Sir David Kinloch of Gilmerton, and was the immediate successor of another poetical incumbent, author of a very popular poem,* The Grave. Mr Kinloch did him

* This gentleman may be mentioned with another dis-

another favour, which had a material influence on his future life; he introduced him to his relation, Lord Milton, then *Sous-Ministre* for Scotland, under Archibald Duke of Argyle, who conceived a very great kindness for him. In a conversation soon after this introduction, the Duke said, "Mr Home, I am now too old to hope for an opportunity of doing you any material service myself; but I will do you the greatest favour in my power, by presenting you to my nephew, the Earl of Bute." Amidst his classical and poetical reading, however, Mr Home occupied himself not only in the studies of Ethics and Divinity, but also in the composition of Sermons. But even at these moments, it would seem as if his mind was constrained, not changed, from its favourite bent; for, on the backs, or blank interstices of the papers containing some of his earliest composed sermons, there are passages of poetry, written in a more or less perfect state, as the inspiration or leisure of the moment prompted or allowed. But his clerical duties, of every kind, were always attended to, and so great a favourite was he with the parishioners of Athelstaneford,

---

tinction, though he did not live to reap the pleasure it must have conferred; he was the father of the late Robert Blair, President of the Court of Session, a name which will be long remembered with reverence and admiration by the Bar of Scotland.

that, as Dr Carlyle was informed by a gentleman who heard him preach his farewell sermon at that church, there was not a dry eye among his audience; and, at a subsequent period, when he retired from active life, and built a house in East-Lothian, near the parish where he had once been minister, his former parishioners, as Lord Haddington informed me, insisted on leading the stones for the building, and would not yield to his earnest importunity to pay them any compensation for their labour.

I have in my possession part of a scroll of answers to the observations of some friendly critic, on the play of *Agis*, the first production of Mr Home's tragic muse, but it is so mutilated, that it is impossible to trace its date, or the person to whom it is addressed; but, from the fragment which remains, Mr Home seems to have availed himself of the remarks of his friend, in several particulars. The original plan of the tragedy, I have understood, was to have constructed the fable solely on the distresses and death of Agis, as a patriot king; but fearing that this subject was too barren of incident and passion, to suit the prevailing dramatic taste, he afterwards added the love part of the plot, by the introduction of the Athenian maid *Euanthe*, betrothed to the hero of the piece, *Lysander*, the friend and avenger of Agis.

Conceiving that, thus improved in its interest, the play was now fit for the stage, he went to Lon-

don about the end of the year 1749, and offered it to Mr Garrick, for representation at Drury-Lane, of which that great actor had recently become manager. But that gentleman did not think it well adapted to the stage, and declined bringing it on, much to the mortification of its author, who, with the feeling natural to such a situation, wrote the following verses on the tomb of Shakespeare, in Westminster-Abbey:

Verses written by Mr Home, with a Pencil, on Shakespeare's Monument in Westminster Abbey.

Image of Shakespeare! To this place I come
To ease my bursting bosom at thy tomb;
For neither Greek nor Roman poet fired
My fancy first, thee chiefly I admired;
And day and night revolving still thy page,
I hoped, like thee, to shake the British stage;
But cold neglect is now my only mead,
And heavy falls it on so proud a head.
If powers above now listen to thy lyre,
Charm them to grant, indulgent, my desire;
Let petrefaction stop this falling tear,
And fix my form for ever marble here.

After this unsuccessful expedition to London, he turned his mind to the composition of the tragedy of Douglas, of which he had, as his friends believed, sketched the plan some time before.

From certain notes and hints, relating to this tragedy, in my possession, it appears to have un-

dergone material alteration from the original design, or rather, indeed, composition; for the plot, which was suggested to the author by the old popular ballad of Gil Morice, seems not to have been materially altered. The names of the persons of the drama appear to have been changed during the time in which the author perfected his piece. That of Norval in those fragments is Norman. Even after the first representations, the name Randolph was substituted for Barnet, the name in the old ballad, which had struck some of the English part of the audience as producing a bad effect, from its being the same with that of the village near London.

With the tragedy of Douglas in his pocket, Mr Home set off on horseback for London, from his house in East-Lothian, in February 1755. The ideas of his friends as to its excellence and success were very sanguine indeed, as appears from the warm expressions used by Dr Carlyle in describing some incidents at the beginning of the author's journey, who was accompanied, to a certain distance on his way, by some of his most intimate friends, of whom Dr Carlyle was one. The habitual carelessness of Mr Home (another quality, I am afraid I must say failing, which I might, perhaps, have enumerated among those allied to the poetical character,) was strongly shewn by his having thought of no better conveyance for this MS., by which he

was to acquire all that fame and future success of which his friends were so confident, than the pocket of the great-coat in which he rode. Dr Carlyle and his other friends trembled for the safety of this drama, their admiration of which he describes as approaching to idolatry, and turned a little out of their road to procure from a clergyman of their acquaintance the loan of a pair of saddle-bags, in which to deposit the MS. Having thus, by the provident care of his friends, secured it from the accidents of the weather, he rode on to London, full of those sanguine hopes which every man in his situation indulges, and presented his play to Garrick, to whom he had procured an introduction; but Garrick did not see those merits which have since rendered Douglas so popular, and returned it to the author, with the mortifying declaration, that it was totally unfit for the stage. Neither Mr Home nor his friends were at all satisfied with this decision, and immediately conceived the plan of bringing it out at the Edinburgh Theatre, then under the management of Digges, an actor of very great powers, (though with many defects,) and of great popularity in Scotland. Its rehearsals were attended by that literary party who were the constant companions of the author, and then the chief arbiters of taste and literature in Edinburgh—Lord Elibank, David Hume, Mr Wedderburn,

Dr Adam Ferguson, and others. Dr Carlyle, who sometimes witnessed those rehearsals, expresses, in his Memoirs, his surprise and admiration at the acting of Mrs Ward, who performed Lady Randolph. Digges was the Douglas of the piece, his supposed father was played by Hayman, and Glenalvon, by Love; actors of very considerable merit, and afterwards of established reputation on the London stage. But Mrs Ward's beauty (for she was very beautiful,) and feeling, tutored with the most zealous anxiety by the author and his friends, charmed and affected the audience as much, perhaps, as has ever been accomplished by the very superior actresses of after times. I was then a boy, but of an age to be sometimes admitted as a sort of page to the tea-drinking parties of Edinburgh. I have a perfect recollection of the strong sensation which Douglas excited among its inhabitants. The men talked of the rehearsals; the ladies repeated what they had heard of the story; some had procured, as a great favour, copies of the most striking passages, which they recited at the earnest request of the company. I was present at the representation; the applause was enthusiastic; but a better criterion of its merits was the tears of the audience, which the tender part of the drama drew forth unsparingly. "The town," says Dr Carlyle, (and I can vouch how truly,) "was in an uproar of exulta-

tion, that a Scotsman should write a tragedy of the first rate, and that its merits were first submitted to them."

But the most remarkable circumstance attending its representation, was the clerical contest which it excited, and the proceedings of the Church of Scotland with regard to it. Religious zeal, and a jealousy of any infringement on the established doctrines of the Presbyterian Kirk, seem to have been more than usually predominant at the time of the appearance of Douglas. About this time was published, "England's Alarm," a complaint of the gross impiety and atheism of the times, applicable to Great Britain in general, but particularly referring to the corruptions of religion in Scotland; among which were specified the breach of the National Covenant, the subsistence of Episcopacy, and the adoption of Episcopal forms of worship, which the author severely condemns, such as kneeling at receiving the sacrament, ecclesiastical habits, (not moral habits, but the dress and costume of the church,) the Liturgy, &c. On the other hand, Lord Kames had just published a small metaphysical treatise, entitled, "Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion." This was supposed by some of the clergy to contain principles and positions derogatory to the Christain faith, and the rules of morality contained in the Gospel. A zealous clergyman, Mr George Anderson, minister

of Chirnside, gave in a complaint against the book, (its author was then unknown,) and the bookseller by whom it was published, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, praying that reverend judicature to call before them the bookseller, in order to his giving up the author, that the Presbytery might pronounce against him such censure as the writing and publishing so wicked a book might seem to deserve. Very able legal answers were given in to this complaint by the counsel for the bookseller, Mr, afterwards Sir John, Dalrymple, and Mr Ferguson of Pitfour; and a pamphlet was written in the author's defence, and in his name, but generally supposed to be the production of Dr Hugh Blair. In both, the natural tendency of Lord Kames's work was contended to be altogether the reverse of what the complaint supposed; and for the particular doctrines laid down in the tract, the counsel for the bookseller, and the writer of the pamphlet in behalf of the author, produced very high authority, in numberless quotations from the fathers of the church, and the most eminent as well as orthodox divines. To these defences, Mr Anderson gave in a reply, under the title of "The Complaint Verified." On the 28th January, 1757, the Presbytery pronounced its sentence in the following terms: "The Presbytery, having resumed the consideration of Mr Anderson's complaint, the majority came to the resolution of dismissing it, on the

ground of the author's having, in his explanatory pamphlet, explained and accounted for the unguarded expressions in his Essays, and expressed his regard for religion ; and to prevent the Presbytery's entering into so abstruse and metaphysical a question."

It is a singular enough coincidence with some church proceedings, about fifty years after, that Dr Blair, in defence of his friend's Essays, expressly states, that one purpose of those Essays was to controvert what appeared to him to be a very dangerous doctrine, held by the author of certain other *Essays*, then recently published, (Mr David Hume,) that, by no principle in human nature, can we discover any real connexion between *cause* and *effect*. According to Dr Blair, the object of one of Lord Kames's Essays is to shew, that though such connexion is not discoverable by *reason*, and by a process of argumentative induction, there is, nevertheless, a real and obvious connexion which every one intuitively perceives between an *effect* and its *cause*. We feel and acknowledge, that every effect implies a cause ; that nothing can begin to exist without a cause of its existence. " We are not left," says the author of the Vindication, " to gather our belief of a *Deity*, from inferences and conclusions deduced through intermediate steps, many or few. How unhappy would it be, for the great bulk of mankind, if this were necessary ! The Deity has dis-

played himself to all men by an *internal sense* common to all, the ignorant as well as the learned; we have the same intuitive perception of Him that we have of our own existence."

In such a temper of the public mind, it was not wonderful if the appearance of a tragedy, written by a Presbyterian clergyman, should scandalize and provoke the Church of Scotland. That party, opposed to Mr Home and his friends, were excited to the severity of their proceedings on this occasion, not only by the conscientious objections which they entertained to such compositions, but perhaps a little by the opposition which then prevailed so keenly between the different parties in the church, and in the supreme judicature of the church, the *General Assembly*.

The Presbytery of Edinburgh published a solemn admonition on the subject, beginning with expressions of deep regret at the growing irreligion of the times, particularly the neglect of the *Sabbath*;* but calculated chiefly to warn all persons

* Yet at that time in Edinburgh there was much more regard to the sacredness of Sunday than now. I was then a boy, and I well remember the reverential silence of the streets, and the tip-toe kind of fear with which, when any accident prevented my attendance on church, I used to pass through them. What would the Presbytery have said now, when, in the time of public worship on a Sunday, not only are the public walks crowded, but idle and blackguard boys

within their bounds, especially the young, and those who had the charge of youth, against the danger of frequenting stage-plays and theatrical entertainments, of which the Presbytery set forth the immoral and pernicious tendency, at considerable length.

This step of the Presbytery, like all other overstrained proceedings of that nature, provoked resistance and ridicule on the part of the public. The wags poured forth parodies, epigrams, and songs. These were, in general, not remarkable for their wit or pleasantry, though some of them were the productions of young men, afterwards eminent in letters or in station.

While the Church was taking public *general* measures on this occasion, it did not neglect to notice what it conceived to be an outrage against its purity and dignity, by instituting proceedings against the individuals of its own body, who had witnessed or countenanced the representation of *Douglas*. Mr Home himself escaped the censure and punishment, which would certainly have reached him, by an abdication of the ministerial function, having resigned his living at Athelstaneford,

---

bawl through the streets, and splash us with their games there?—an indecency of which, though no friend to puritanical preciseness, and still less to religious persecution, I rather think the police ought to take cognizance.

in June, 1757. Mr Home's intimate friends and acquaintance, who had been present at the representation of his tragedy, were censured or punished, according to the degree of their supposed misconduct. Mr White, the minister of Libberton, was suspended for a month, a mitigated sentence, in consideration of his apology for a conduct into which he had been unwarily led; "that he attended the representation only *once*, and endeavoured to conceal himself in a corner, to avoid giving offence." Messrs Carlyle, Home of Polwarth, Scott at Westruther, Cupples at Swinton, and Steel at Stairs, underwent different degrees of censure; and several other Presbyteries adopted and enforced the language of that of Edinburgh, with regard to the baneful and immoral effects of stage-plays, pernicious at all times, but doubly improper and sinful at a period of great dearth and distress among the poor, and of national degradation and calamity. This was at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, when Byng had failed of relieving Minorca, and Braddock had been defeated in America.

Such was then the prevailing opinion of the Church of Scotland, with regard to the impropriety and immorality of attending theatrical representations, especially by clergymen, though, indeed, the overture of one Synod, and the language of most of them, expressed that opinion with regard to all persons whatsoever. The difference between

the opinions of the two Churches of England and Scotland, in this matter, was strongly set forth in some of the writings on the subject; and the Presbytery of Dunse, in answer to a representation made to them by that of Edinburgh, used the following expression: "We cannot allow ourselves to think that a thing, really criminal in itself, can be innocent or indifferent on the other side of the Tweed." Something, however, must be allowed to custom, in considering the lesser moralities of manners and deportment. The nakedness of an American, or a Hiudoo, is no breach of modesty or decorum; but that of an inhabitant of London or Edinburgh, would be a flagrant offence against both. In the question about theatrical exhibitions, as far as concerned the tragedy of Douglas, and the propriety or impropriety of the ecclesiastical opinions and proceedings to which it gave rise, it can only be fairly said, even by the advocates for the moral or innocent effects of dramatic entertainments, that Scotland, at the period of these proceedings, had not attained the refinement or liberality of the church of her sister kingdom. To the many excellent persons, of different ranks and persuasions, who have held, or still hold, dramatic entertainments to be of such baneful effect on the moral and religious principles of a people, I can only reply, that viewing their scruples with that indulgence and respect to which the purity of their

intentions, and the respectability of their characters are entitled, I should, were I to allow the justice of their fears, be obliged to regret that a department of literary composition, which affords the amplest field to the talents of the writer, and the feelings of the reader of poetry, should be liable to the imputation of such hurtful consequences; I should remind them how much of life is spent, and must be spent, in amusements; and that, to draw the young and the gay into innocent fields of amusement, is to gain or to save a great deal of their time from hurtful dissipation. But, in truth, the plea on behalf of theatrical exhibitions rests on higher and more certain grounds; for it is proved by repeated experience, marked in the accurate and impartial registers of officers of police, that in several great cities, when, from any accident, such exhibitions are suspended, every kind of wickedness and crime, even those which trench on the public safety, (without taking into account any advantage of improvement in manners,) has always increased in a very great degree. "The truth seems to be," as our venerable colleague Dr Adam Ferguson expresses it, in a letter to me on the subject of Mr Home's dramatic writings, "that theatrical compositions, like every other human production, are, in the abstract, not more laudable or censurable than any other species of composition, but are either good or bad, moral or immoral, according to the

management or the effect of the individual tragedy or comedy we are to see represented, or to peruse." On this ground, certainly the tragedy of Douglas may confidently put itself on its trial; both the sentiments and the feelings expressed in it being of the most laudable and virtuous kind,—parental tenderness, and aspiring virtue.

The elder Sheridan, then manager of the Theatre at Dublin, sent Mr Home a gold medal, in testimony of his admiration of Douglas; and his wife, a woman not less respectable for her virtues than for genius and accomplishments, drew the idea of her admired novel of *Sydney Biddulph*, (as her introduction bears,) from the genuine moral effect of that excellent tragedy.

Amidst the censures of the Church, the public suffrage was strong in its favour, and the houses were crowded every night of its representation. Perhaps the success of the play excited the envy of some as much as the nature and species of its composition, and the situation of its author, produced the censure of others; for, among the *jeux d'esprit* produced on the occasion, were some written by men themselves poets, and not at all remarkable for religious strictness or severe morality. Its defenders were found among all ranks and professions. Mr Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, wrote some of its lighter defences. Mr Adam Ferguson published a serious pamphlet, in defence of

the morality of dramatic composition, deduced from Scripture, particularly exemplified in the story of Joseph and his Brethren; Dr Carlyle, an ironical pamphlet, under the title of, "Reasons why the Tragedy of Douglas should be Burnt by the hands of the Common Hangman;" and afterwards he wrote a paper, calculated for the lower ranks, which was hawked about the streets, "History of the Bloody Tragedy of Douglas, as it is now performing at the Theatre in the Canongate." This paper had such an effect as to add two more nights to the already unprecedented run of the play.

Against Dr Carlyle, the prosecution of the Presbytery was carried on for a considerable time, till at last it terminated in the *brutum fulmen* of a censure and admonition. The learned Dr Wallace, of whom I have made mention in a former part of this Memoir, wrote an anonymous letter to Dr Carlyle, full of the soundest advice, and assuring him of his support in the proceedings before the Presbytery.

The Synod of Mid-Lothian and Tweeddale, a body free from the partialities and prejudices of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, pronounced a much more moderate sentence than this last-mentioned judicature had done on the matter of Douglas, and of Mr Home's conduct as a dramatic author; and the sentence of the Synod was affirmed in the General Assembly, by 117 votes to 34. Yet next day, on

the motion of a gentleman, whom one would not have supposed likely to be the advocate of severe or illiberal proceedings, Mr George Dempster, the Assembly passed a declaratory act, prohibiting the clergy from being concerned in, or countenancing, theatrical representations. But the manners overcame the law of the Church; and country clergymen, when in Edinburgh, frequented the theatre when any eminent actor or actress performed there. During the first visit of Mrs Siddons to this city, in 1784, while the General Assembly was sitting, there was, I have been told, great difficulty in procuring a full attendance of its members, on those evenings when she was to perform. A distinction was justly allowed between exhibitions, in which that great actress gave new force and impression to the noblest tragic sentiments, and those more exceptionable representations, which our comic stage, even in its present reformed state, sometimes exhibits. The persecution, however, which Mr Home and his tragedy endured, was of use to both. Lord Bute, to whom I have mentioned his introduction by the Duke of Argyle, now warmly patronized an author, whose sufferings, as well as genius, recommended him to his benevolence and favour. Mr Home went to London, soon after the publication of his tragedy, in March 1757, when it was brought out at Covent-Garden, with much success. Garrick at that time maintained his resolution of not

bringing it out at Drury-Lane, but afterwards made up for his former neglect, by the warmest patronage of Mr Home's subsequent tragedies; which I am sorry to be obliged to impute to that respect for great men for which that celebrated actor was remarkable, Lord Bute's favour being a surer passport to his theatre than the merit even of Douglas.

Mr Home now lived very much with that nobleman, and was in such habits of intimacy with his young pupil, the Prince of Wales, as seldom falls to the share of any individual of his rank and situation in life. Lord Bute was a man of some learning, and considerable science, and of not less virtue than either; but his virtue was of an austere unbending sort, and his natural shyness and reserve did not, any more than his better qualities, accommodate themselves to the circle around him, which a minister of England must necessarily cultivate, if he does not happen to possess those splendid and commanding talents which make some men, but those very rare, independent of any other support.

From this disposition, which his original station of preceptor to the Prince did not tend to overcome, Lord Bute was, more than any other minister, inclined to relax from the constraints of form, and the severity of business, in the society of a few familiar friends, with whom he found himself at perfect ease. This is natural to the situation, because the mind, like the body, feels a relief in the

change of posture; to Lord Bute it was more than usually grateful, both from that monkish sort of austerity and reserve of which I have just taken notice, and from a tincture of family pride, which inclines a man to lean upon inferiors, rather than to hold himself in the attitude of equality. His original patronage of Mr Home was meritorious, from its benevolence and attention to the encouragement of letters. He was then the patron of the poet; it was afterwards somewhat of a more selfish cast, from the indulgence which he found in the society of the man—an indulgence which he sometimes gratified at the expence of persons of high rank, and great political influence, who saw, with indignation, those private interviews which were refused to them, granted to this obscure man of letters.

There was, I have been informed, the same sort of imprudence in the private life of the great Earl of Chatham, who, in the intervals of those paroxysms of the gout to which he was subject, was frequently peevish and inaccessible to men of high rank and high office, but indulged himself in the familiar society of very inferior dependents, much less recommended by talent or agreeable conversation than Mr Home; but, in Lord Chatham, these little infringements of politeness or etiquette were not felt nor resented. Amidst the splendour of his tri-

umphant administration, those specks of a private kind were unnoticed or forgotten.

Mr Home has sometimes been accused of allowing his vanity of Lord Bute's friendship and familiarity to get the better of his prudence, or of the reserve which he ought to have maintained on account of his patron; and that he increased the unpopularity of the minister by displaying his disproportionate favour and familiarity to himself. If he shewed a certain degree of weakness and want of discretion in the vanity which he indulged from the favour and intimacy of the first Lord of the Treasury, he exhibited a degree of purity of mind and disinterestedness, much less common, in never turning this favour and intimacy to his own private advantage. He never asked, (and I cannot mention it without feeling equal surprise and displeasure,) he was never offered, any office or appointment, so many of which Lord Bute had in his power to bestow. It was solely at the suggestion of some of his friends, without the most distant hint from himself, that Lord Bute at last bestowed on him the office of *Conservator of Scots Privileges at Campvere*, which Mr Home enjoyed for several years, till he resigned it in 1770, (retaining, I believe, the salary,) to Mr Crawford, of Rotterdam; to whom, as a merchant in Holland, it was important, from that sort of rank and station which in that country it conferred.

But though his self-love never took advantage of this intimacy to benefit himself, the warmth of his friendship sometimes exerted itself in recommending others to favourable situations, which, however, I believe were what their merits might have fairly claimed, though such, as without his commendation, they might have failed to obtain.

Had he been selfishly disposed, he had a golden opportunity of enriching himself. At the peace of Paris, in 1763, Mr Home was then living with Lord Bute in London, and in the intimate knowledge of the diplomatic proceedings which were carried on by our Ambassador in France. I believe there were not wanting men who were willing to suggest to him, as well as to share, the obvious advantage which such opportunities of intelligence, or even conjecture, might afford in the then fluctuating state of public expectation, and the consequent variations in the state of the funds. But Mr Home had a sense of honour and delicacy much above even the harbouring of any such thoughts of private emolument. His mind, indeed, had that heroic cast which I have formerly mentioned, as far removed as possible from avarice, or the love of gain. His inattention to money-matters went perhaps a blameable length, or at least was carried to a degree which his friends allowed to be imprudent. I well remember a saying of the witty Lord Elibank, when he was told that Dr Adam Ferguson had got

a pension. "It is a very laudable grant," said he, "and I rejoice at it; but it is no more in the power of the King to make Adam Ferguson, or John Home rich, than to make me poor,"—alluding to the well-known economy, or parsimony, as it might fairly be termed, of his own disposition.

I am aware that I have trespassed both in point of diffuseness, and somewhat also against chronological arrangement, in thus giving all the particulars of Mr Home's life which stand in connexion with Lord Bute, instead of exactly following the order of events. But I was induced to give the above sketch of Mr Home's connexion with Lord Bute, and its results, as it marked the leading features of both their minds, and was much more honourable to Mr Home, than those who sometimes heard him talk of their familiarity were led to suppose. Among his weaknesses, (and it is one of that unpopular sort which men are apt to remark and to remember,) was a desire of egotism, which he was apt to indulge in recounting anecdotes of past times, and of eminent men. He had lived in a society of an excellence, and also of a rank, with which, from peculiar circumstances, he had been associated beyond what men in his situation of life commonly are. This (as is altogether in nature,) made that society a more leading object in his mind and his discourse, than in that of men whose original rank or situation entitles them to

enjoy it. I have mentioned above, his remarkable memory for anecdotes, and his happy manner of relating them; those little narratives became naturally the chief materials of his conversation, and the openness and warmth of his temper never kept back his own share in the occurrences he was relating. In truth, a man never actually forgets himself in recounting such anecdotes; it is the reserve of politeness only that makes him forbear talking in the first person; and reserve was a quality which, of all men, Mr Home possessed the least. This style of conversation is, however, very unpopular, except when sparingly introduced: Its hearers, who have not participated in such scenes or adventures, feel the details of them a sort of foreign language, by which they are cut off from a share in the conversation. Proud men feel resentment, humble ones an awkwardness, in being mere auditors on such occasions, and are apt to impute altogether to vanity or conceit, what the speaker is often in truth telling for their entertainment.

On this ground, there was a most intimate friend of our author's, who might have been a pattern for his imitation. I never knew a man of such pleasing talents for conversation as Dr Robertson: He spoke, as became him, a good deal; but there was nothing assuming or authoritative either in the manner or the matter of his discourse. He took

every opportunity of calling on his hearers for their share of the dialogue,—of asking their opinion or information on the subject of it, and introduced such topics as gave opportunities for his asking such information or opinions. I had often occasion to be with him along with strangers at their first introduction, not unfrequently to introduce them myself. When we left his house, they always expressed their admiration of his general knowledge, as well as of his politeness. The Doctor's general knowledge enabled him to transport himself, as it were, into the country of the stranger; and to speak of that country with the deference of an inquirer—a manner which is always flattering to the person we address, because it seems to call for the favour of his information.

The agreeableness of Mr Home's manners and conversation, as much as the notice of Lord Bute, introduced him into a society in London of the most respectable and pleasing kind. Lord Loughborough, (then Mr Wedderburn,) his brother-in-law, Sir Harry Erskine, Mr Robert Adams, Mr Garrick, Mr Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr Ross Mackie, Drs Armstrong, Smollett, Pitcairn, and William Hunter, were his daily companions. They formed a club at the British Coffee-house, of which the then mistress was a woman of uncommon talents, and the

most agreeable conversation, Mrs Anderson, sister of Dr Douglas.

Garrick, at whose theatre Douglas was now occasionally performed, and always with the greatest applause, brought out Mr Home's tragedy of Agis, (the second in order of representation, though the first in order of composition,) in 1758, and played himself *Lysander* to Mrs Cibber's *Euanthe*. I have in my possession an original note of Garrick's, written on the morning after the first representation, which is conceived in the following terms :—

" My dear Friend,

" Joy, joy, joy to you !

" My anxiety yesterday gave me a small touch of the gravel,* which, with a purging, weakened me prodigiously ; but our success has stopped the one and cured the other. I am very happy, because I think you are so. The Ode, as I foretold, is certainly too long. There were other little mistakes, but all shall be set right to-morrow. Ever most affectionately,

" My Genius,

" D. Garrick.

" Pray, let me see you at twelve to-morrow."

---

* A complaint which he laboured under all his life, which was often occasioned by the violent exertions of his acting, and of which he died at last.

In London, or at Lord Bute's house, at Luton, in Bedfordshire, Mr Home passed much of his time from this period, for several years. He was in Scotland, however, when his Siege of Aquileia was brought out at Drury-Lane, in 1760, Garrick playing, as usual, the principal part, *Emilius*, to Mrs Cibber's *Cornelia*. I remember to have heard from Dr Robertson, that in a letter written by Garrick to Mr Home, after reading this tragedy to Mrs Garrick, and a young lady then living with them, of whose taste he had a high opinion, he expressed the greatest admiration of the play, and predicted the most brilliant success in its representation. But his prediction was not fulfilled; notwithstanding all his skill in scenic effect, he had not been aware of one objection to the conduct of this drama, namely, that most, or indeed almost all the incidents, are told to, not witnessed by, the spectators, who in England, beyond any other country, are swayed by the Horatian maxim, and feel very imperfectly those incidents which are not "*oculis subjecta fidelibus.*" It rather languished, therefore, in the representation, though supported by such admirable acting, and did not run so many nights as the manager confidently expected.

In this year, 1760, he published those three tragedies of Douglas, Agis, and the Siege of Aquileia, in one volume, dedicated to the Prince of Wales, who in that very year having succeeded to

the crown, showed an immediate additional mark of favour to Mr Home, by settling on him a pension of L.300 per annum, from his privy purse.

In 1763, he had obtained, as I have mentioned above, the office of Conservator of Scots Privileges at Campvere. The salary of this office was L.300 per annum, which, with his former pension from the crown, gave him independence, to him it might be called wealth. This wealth he used as he did every thing else; he made it an offering to friendship. "His house," said Dr Adam Ferguson, "was always as full of his friends as it could hold, fuller than, in modern manners, it could be made to hold." David Hume told Mr Ferguson he should lecture his friend on his want of attention to money-matters. "I am afraid I should do so with little effect," answered Dr Ferguson; "and, to tell you the truth, I am not sure if I don't like him the better for this foible."

One instance of such inattention Mr Ferguson relates in a letter to me, received but a few days ago. "I happened once to have occasion for L.200. John Home told me he had L.200 more than he had immediate use for, and he lent it me upon my note of hand. Soon after, having received some money, I remitted to my agent at London this L.200, with the interest due upon it, with directions to pay it to Mr Home, in discharge of my debt. My agent paid him the money, and begged

to have up my note. He said he could not recollect any thing of a note, but he would look for it when he went to Scotland. The circumstance was forgotten by us both for several years, when at last, having married and got a family, I began to think that it was possible the note might appear against my children after both our deaths; and I wrote to Mr Home, requesting, that if he had not found the note, he would write a letter to me, acknowledging that the debt had been paid, and that the note, if it appeared, should be of no avail against me or my heirs. I had a letter from my friend in reply, saying, that to talk of finding any such note among his papers, was like talking of finding the lost Books of Livy; but he gave the acknowledgment in the letter, in what he conceived the most proper terms, though, perhaps," said Mr Ferguson, " in terms too poetical to be good in law. ' If ever the note appears,' said his letter, ' it will be of no use, except to shew what a foolish, thoughtless, inattentive fellow I am.' "

He represented the Dutch ecclesiastical establishment at Campvere, in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to which that establishment had long had the privilege of sending a member. He was in use to come from London to attend in his place in the Assembly, and took a share occasionally in the debates in support of his friend Dr Robertson, and his party. His speeches were

not remarkable either for force of argument or display of eloquence, but were delivered in an easy and gentlemanlike style and manner; though, from his particular situation, an ex-churchman of the Presbyterian establishment, they were not popular with one side of the house, and sometimes called forth severe and sarcastic replies from some of the leading members sitting there.

The General Assembly had then to boast of some of the best public speaking that was to be heard in Britain, the House of Commons scarcely excepted. The great question which divided the speakers was that of *patronage*, (the right of nominating the minister by the proprietor of that right,) the exercise of which had separated a considerable number of the people from the Established Church, under the denomination of *Seceders*, and was not less productive of warm debates in this kind of ecclesiastical parliament. On one side were ranged Dr Robertson and his associates. Dr Robertson had a power of speaking in a manner admirably calculated for his situation as a leader of what was called the Moderate Party of the Church, temperate, conciliating, and candid; he generally wound up the debate with a concise and impartial view of the opposite arguments, and frequently brought the opposite parties to an amicable settlement, by proposing some resolution which allowed to both a portion of what they had contended for,

and did not trench on any of the principles which they considered as fixed, and not to be departed from. On the other side was Dr Dick, one of the most powerful speakers, in point of eloquence and impression, that had ever appeared in that, or any other popular assembly; and another man, a plain country clergyman, but of infinite native humour, —— Fairbairn, the minister of Dumbarton, whose talent for enlivening a debate by pleasantry, or turning the laugh against his adversary by sarcasm, not rude, though keen, I have seldom heard equalled by any debater whomsoever.

In 1767, Mr Home got a long lease, on very favourable terms, of the farm of Kilduff, in East-Lothian, from his former patron and friend, Sir David Kinloch. On this farm he built a house, where he lived, with only occasional interruptions, for the succeeding ten or 12 years of his life.

In 1769, his tragedy of *The Fatal Discovery* was brought out at Drury-Lane. Its original title was *Rivine*, from the name of the heroine of the story, which was taken from one of the fragments of Ossian. But Garrick, afraid of the prejudices then prevalent in London against Scotsmen, and Scots subjects, changed its name to that of The Fatal Discovery; and, in order more effectually to disguise its origin, procured a young English gentleman, a student from Oxford, to attend the rehearsals, and personate the author. But the suc-

cess of the play drew its real author from his covert; and, after some nights' representation, Mr Home declared himself the writer of the tragedy. The event verified the fears of Garrick; the succeeding representations were but indifferently attended, and the piece languished only for a few nights longer. The natural vanity of an author came in aid of this disappointment; Mr Home imputed the thinness of those houses to the circumstance of the public attention being entirely engrossed by the decision of the celebrated *Douglas* cause, which happened at that time.

In 1770, Mr Home was married to the daughter of his friend and relation, Mr Home, the minister of Foggo, formerly of Polwarth, who, notwithstanding her delicate frame, and constantly interrupted health, has outlived her husband, who watched her with a tenderness suitable to those amiable dispositions which formed so prominent a part of his character.

In the year 1773, his tragedy of Alonzo was performed at Drury-Lane, to which his friend Garrick contributed a justly celebrated epilogue, certainly one of the best which his genius, so prolific in that species of composition, ever produced. This play was the most popular of all Mr Home's tragedies, Douglas excepted, and met with great success in the representation. Mrs Barry's *Ormisinda* was one of the parts in which that celebrated

actress exerted her powers, in displaying the violence and energy of feeling, with striking effect.

In 1776, he was called suddenly from London, by accounts he received from Mr Ferguson, of the dangerous state of his celebrated friend, David Hume. He set off with all that warmth of affection which was natural to him, met his friend on the road, and accompanied him in his journey to London and Bath, which he took by medical advice, on account of his health. I am possessed of a journal of this expedition, which, as it contains some interesting particulars of the great philosopher's closing life, as well as of his confidential opinions, I may, perhaps, if the Society inclines, read, by way of appendix to this paper; meantime, I cannot resist submitting to its perusal one letter of Mr Hume's, to which, I am persuaded, it will listen with a considerable degree of interest; it is dated 6th August, 1776, not many weeks before that celebrated man's death :—

"*Edinburgh, 6th August*, 1776.

"My Dear John,

"I shall begin with telling you the only piece of good news of the family, which is, that my nephew, in no more than two days that he has staid here, has recovered so surprisingly, that he is scarcely knowable, or rather is perfectly knowable, for he was not so on his first arrival. [This relates to Mr

Hume's eldest nephew, Joseph, at that time just returned from abroad, in very bad health.] Such are the advantages of youth! His uncle declines, if not with so great rapidity, yet pretty sensibly. Sunday, ill; half of yesterday the same; easy at present; prepared to suffer a little to-morrow; perhaps less the day after. Dr Black says I shall not die of a dropsy, as I imagined, but of inanition and weakness. He cannot, however, fix, with any probability, the time, otherwise he would frankly tell me.

"Poor Edmonstone, [Col. Edmonstone of Newton] and I parted to-day, with a plentiful effusion of tears; all those *Belzebubians* * have not hearts of iron. I hope you met with every thing well at Foggo, and receive nothing but good news from Buxton. In spite of Dr Black's caution, I venture to foretel that I shall be yours cordially and sincerely till the month of October next.

(Signed) "DAVID HUME."

In the beginning of the year 1778, the tragedy of Alfred was performed at Drury-Lane, but did not succeed. I do not mean in this place to enter

---

* Colonel Edmonstone was a member of what was called the *Ruffian Club;* men whose hearts were milder than their manners, and their principles more correct than their habits of life.

into any critical discussion of Mr Home's works; but I may just say, that this tragedy is undoubtedly the weakest of his productions, and it was not surprising that it did not please the public. Indeed, had it possessed more merit than it did, an English audience could have hardly been pleased to see their Alfred, the pride of their country in its earliest age, the patriot and the lawgiver, melted down to the weakness of love, like the commonplace hero of an ordinary drama.

In the year 1778, he had another opportunity of indulging his passion for the military character, by accepting a commission in the newly-embodied regiment of Mid-Lothian Fencibles, of which the Duke of Buccleuch was colonel. In this appointment he possessed the advantage of having for the captain of the company of which he was lieutenant, his particular friend Lord Binning, and for his brother lieutenant, Mr W. Adam, the son of that family with whom he had been so long on terms of the strictest intimacy. Of this corps, he attended the duties with all the ardour of a young soldier, till they were interrupted by an unfortunate accident which had a material influence on his future life, a fall from his horse, by which he suffered so violent a contusion on his head, as for some days deprived him of sense, and nearly extinguished his life. Though he recovered the accident so far as his bodily health was concerned, his mind was never

restored to its former vigour, nor regained its former vivacity. It did not, however, abate his military ardour; and after being for a short while at home, he thought himself so much re-established, as to join the regiment at Aberdeen, but he found himself not strong enough to go through the duties of his station, nor even to attend the mess, which he was anxious to do. The friendship of Lord and Lady Binning, then at Aberdeen, did every thing for him that kindness or assiduous care could accomplish; but though his health seemed sufficiently restored, his head was not able for numerous society, and he was obliged, though with great reluctance, and not without the most urgent requests of his friends, to resign his commission and return to Edinburgh, whence he some time after repaired to Bath, at which place, a residence of some months, with attention to regimen and quiet, appeared perfectly to re-establish his health, but his intellectual powers were never restored to their original state.

He had very early projected a History of the Rebellion 1745. Indeed, I can perceive from some notes on his earliest papers, that he had thought of such a work immediately after the conclusion of the rebellion, in 1746, or 47. During his intervals of leisure, and more particularly after the unsuccessful performance of Alfred, when he seemed to cease writing for the stage, he resumed the plan of this history, and had been in use to collect mate-

rials for it by correspondence and communication with such persons as could afford them, and even by journies or tours to the Highlands of Scotland. In one of these journies, I happened to travel for two or three days along with him, and had occasion to hear his ideas on the subject. They were such as a man of his character and tone of mind would entertain, full of the mistaken zeal and ill-fated gallantry of the Highlanders, the self-devoted heroism of some of their chiefs, and the ill-judged severity, carried (by some subordinate officers,) the length of great inhumanity, of the conquering party. A specimen of this original style of his composition, still remains in his Account of the Gallant Lochiel. But the complexion of his history was materially changed before its publication, which, at one time, he had very frequently and positively determined should not be made till after his death, but which he was tempted, by that fondness for our literary offspring which the weakness of age produces, while it leaves less power of appreciating their merits, to hasten; and accordingly published the work at London in 1802. It was dedicated to the King, as a mark of his gratitude for his majesty's former gracious attention to him; a circumstance which perhaps contributes to weaken and soften down the original composition, in compliment to the monarch whose uncle's memory was somewhat implicated in the impolitic, as well as unge-

nerous use which Mr Home conceived had been made of the victory of Culloden. I need not give any further account of the book, which is fresh in the recollection of the Society; but I may inform them, that it was read in its native state before it was emasculated by his later alterations, by a very competent judge, Mr Ferguson, who was interested and pleased with it. He said to me, however, with his usual frankness, in the recent communication which I have mentioned above, that he himself had contributed to spoil his friend's History of the Rebellion. "I had often laid down to him those principles of historical composition on which I afterwards wrote my Roman History; first, that the narrative should be plain and simple, without embellishment; and, secondly, that it should relate only great public events, and trace only the characters of individuals connected with them, without descending into the minuter details of biography. Now these," said Dr Ferguson, "were perfectly applicable to my subject, but not at all to that of my friend. The Rebellion 1745 was too unimportant in itself to make a history, without borrowing such ornament from style, and such interest from anecdote, as Voltaire has given to what may be called his Historical Romance of the Expedition of Charles Edward Stuart."

In the year 1779, Mr Home left Kilduff, and fixed his residence in Edinburgh, where, with the

exception of some journies to London, and particularly that made for the unfortunate purpose of publishing his History of the Rebellion, he resided till his death, which happened on the 5th September, 1808, in the 86th year of his age.

For some time before that event, he had gradually sunk into a state of bodily and mental weakness, which makes death a desirable event, both for a man's own sake and that of his friends; yet the warmth of his heart remained unextinguished amidst the feebleness of his frame. Lord Haddington, (whose kindness as Lord Binning had been so useful to him when an officer in the Lothian Fencible Regiment,) saw him among the last times any person, beyond those of his own family, were admitted to his room. He looked at his lordship for some time with an uncertainty as to his person, but shortly after, recovering the recollection of his old friend, his features assumed the smile of satisfaction, and he pressed his hand with a silent assurance of his tender remembrance. It was gratifying to his friends thus to see him pass through his last moments with a decay of body undisturbed by pain, and a serenity of mind, the effect of goodness and virtue exercised in this world, and the forerunner of their reward in a better.

The Society must have been sensible of a defect in this paper, the want of any critical account or examination of Mr Home's works; but I was aware

that I must exhaust its patience by what it was necessary for me to read of the principal events of his life, and the characters of his friends. I could not think of tiring it with listening to my remarks on his works, or with another usual accompaniment, perhaps at least as material, of such memoirs as this,—the most interesting letters of such of his friends and correspondents as were conspicuous in public or literary life. These I therefore reserve to a future meeting, if the Society shall think they are likely to deserve being read; and with regard to the letters, I shall derive great advantage from the delay, because it is only this very day that I have received from a near relation of Mr Home's, a very large collection of those which he received from Mr D. Hume, Mr Garrick, Dr Blair, Lord Elibank, and others, strongly characteristic both of the writers themselves, of the persons to whom they were addressed, and not unfrequently of the times when they were written.

SECOND PART.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS WORKS, AND THE LETTERS OF HIS CORRESPONDENTS.

I HAD intended, previously to giving any account of Mr Home's Works, to have prefaced it with a short notice of the state of the literature of this part of the kingdom at the time when he began to write; but I found this statement likely to grow, under my hands, to a size rather disproportionate to what might be called the text of my biographical sketch of the poet.

I will content myself, at present, with mentioning the general state of the public taste and opinion with regard to the drama, at the period when Mr Home first began to cultivate dramatic poetry. It was not long after Mr Garrick had opened the new theatre of *Drury Lane*, with that idolatry of *Shakespeare*, which his admirable acting, in some of the principal characters of that inimitable poet, tended so strongly to confirm. The heroics of the

former age had gone into that oblivion from which fashion only had rescued them at their first production. Such was the power of that fashion, that Otway's admirable tragedies of the *Orphan*, and *Venice Preserved*, had received only a moderate degree of public approbation; while his play of *Don Carlos*, every way inferior to these, and possessing, indeed, very little merit of any kind, received the unbounded applause which the Duke of Buckingham has recorded in his satyrical poem of the *Session of the Poets*. Among the candidates for the laureateship, Otway is introduced, not as founding his claim on the excellent dramas first above mentioned, but as

> "Tom Shadwell's dear Zany,
> Who swears, for heroics, he writes best of any,
> *Don Carlos* his pockets so amply had filled"——

the other line of the couplet is so gross and disgusting, that the Society will excuse my repeating it.

At the time of Mr Home's beginning to turn his thoughts to the composition of tragedy, this author, Otway, had attained that true rank in dramatic poetry to which his power over the passions, and the exquisite tenderness of his pathetic scenes, so justly entitled him. His name was always coupled with that of Shakespeare, by the friends of the drama in this country. Next in rank were

placed Rowe and Southern; the first for the richness and melody of his verse, the last for that natural pathos with which he invested dramatic distress. Congreve's single tragedy of the *Mourning Bride* had been received with great applause; certainly there was something very impressive in one of the characters, (that of *Zara*,) and the incidents, if not very probable, were striking and theatrical. Dr Young had, with a very successful boldness, produced a play on the same subject as that of *Othello*, which owed, perhaps, great part of its success to that semi-bombastic dignity with which his *Zanga* was invested, a character to which Young's florid and swelling diction was well suited, and which gave to some actors, who were celebrated for their performance of that part, (the Irish *Mossop* in particular,) an opportunity of displaying strong powers, better adapted to the savage and relentless energy of the Moor, than to the expression of more natural feelings. A few months before the first representation of *Douglas*, Moore brought out his tragedy of the *Gamester*, a dramatic story, sketched with somewhat a finer pencil than the plays of Lillo, whose family tragedies (as they may be called) had been favourably received by the public, and were on a plan that might be considered original, as they preceded, by a considerable period, the *drames* of the French stage, which, for some time, were so popular in France. The *Gamester*, how-

ever, with all its merits, rather languished on the London theatre, till the reflected reputation which it borrowed from the success of a French imitation of it, which Garrick found in high favour at Paris, brought it into equal favour on the London stage; and the Society knows the celebrity it has since acquired from the exquisite representation of its domestic distress in the acting of Mrs Siddons. I may speak of Mrs Siddons, now that she has quitted the stage, as an actress of former times; it would not, perhaps, be altogether delicate to speak of performers who continue to hold a high place there.

Mr Home does not seem to have written with any of the above-named authors in his view.—Shakespeare, of whose excellence he was an enthusiastic admirer, he did not think of imitating in manner or in style; and the later poets he does not appear, from any of his private notes or letters which I have seen, to have either studied or followed. He had, I presume, very early conceived the idea of dramatic composition, and indeed I have not been able to find traces of any poetical attempts of his early life, when he wrote poetry independently of this idea. In his admiration of ancient republicanism, which the warm and enthusiastic turn of mind which I have before mentioned, as natural to him, readily excited, he had written a prose essay of considerable length, (already noticed

in the first part of this paper,) somewhat after the manner of Plutarch, on the comparative merits of the Grecian characters of *Agis* and *Cleomenes*, and the Roman ones of the two *Gracchi*. In the course of this historical dissertation, he seems to have caught the idea of dramatizing that portion of Spartan history which it led him to study, and he produced his first tragedy of *Agis*. The plan of this tragedy, as it first rose in his mind, appears to have been conceived without the agency of any other passion than that of patriotism on the one side, and ambition on the other; but after proceeding a certain length, he was convinced, (as Addison had been in writing *Cato*,) that his play would not succeed in representation without somewhat more of interest and tenderness being woven into the story, and therefore he introduced the love of *Lysander* and *Euanthe*. This, certainly, whatever objection might be made to it with regard to unity of action, improved the theatrical effect of the plot and incidents of the piece, and gave an opportunity, in particular, for one incident in the scene where *Lysander*, disguised in the dress of a *helot*, attempts to kill *Amphares*, but is checked by the threat of the Spartan chief, to stab *Euanthe*, if her lover makes any further resistance, which the author set a particular value on, as he expressed strongly to me on a subsequent occasion, and which Garrick, whose attention to stage effect sometimes, very na-

turally, overcame his literary or critical judgment, perused, (as will appear from a letter which I shall read by and by,) with the highest approbation. The tragedy of *Agis* remained several years in its author's possession, without his being able to procure its admission to the stage. It was read by several of his literary friends, among whom was a gentleman of great ability, but whose abilities were better known as a politician than as a critic, the late Mr Oswald of Dunnikeir, from whom I beg leave, in this place, to read a letter to Mr Home on the subject. The general remarks of this letter are more distinguished by their good sense than by their novelty; and I should perhaps think it too long for the Society to hear, were it not for one interesting circumstance, namely, that it contains the opinion of the great Lord Chatham on the tragedy of Agis, Mr Oswald having left the MS. with that illustrious statesman, for the purpose of obtaining his remarks on it. It is pleasant thus to attend, into the walks of literature and private life, the great public characters who have ruled the fate of nations; to mark the current of their minds in its purer state, unsoiled and unperturbed amidst the mazes of politics, or the stormy regions of ambition. I am, however, extremely sorry to say, that Lord Chatham's (then Mr Pitt's) own letter has been lost or mislaid by Mr Home, the most careless man on earth with regard to papers, so that we

can only judge of the criticism which it contained, from the representation of Mr Oswald in the letter with which it was accompanied, and in which it was amplified and enlarged.

" DEAR SIR,

" I received last night a letter from Mr Pitt, which, as it contains a judgment on your play, I have enclosed for your consideration. Since receiving it, I have considered your piece, with a particular view to the objections contained in the letter; which, though not quite enough opened, nor sufficiently accompanied with reasons, yet, as they are said to proceed from sentiment, and come from people of taste, deserve the most serious consideration, taste and sentiment being the ultimate tests of all poetical composition; though it is possible, by reasoning, to discover the foundations on which such judgments proceed.

" The first objection seems directed singly against the *manner* in which the love affair betwixt *Lysander* and *Euanthe* is executed, and condemnation is past on the expression of that passion, in both these personages. This criticism is founded entirely on sentiment. But, upon the best reflection I am able to make, if it is a just one, it is more deeply founded, and lies against the love intrigue itself, which is not, perhaps from its nature cannot be, sufficiently made a part of the main action, so as to mingle

with, or be transfused into it, and contribute to the general distress or catastrophe. If that is the case, not only any imperfections in this part will be more visible, but at the same time less excusable, than if in those incidents or characters which are more peculiarly parts of the main design. The reason of this seems to be, that the attention of the mind being chiefly fixed to the main object, easily passes over whatever is immediately connected with, or contributes to it; and, consequently, easily escapes and forgives such small slips and faults as occur in the hurry which this attention creates, providing they do not intercept the view of the main object, or divert the attention any other way. Besides, while the attention remains fixed in general, such slips and faults are not so soon discovered. No questions are asked while the attention is carried on; and in the progress new lights arise, to clear up what would otherwise be obscure. The mind rests satisfied on the whole, and only critics perhaps demand greater exactness; but it is quite the reverse in episodes, or double plots; for, as these infallibly divert the attention of the mind from the main object, they as infallibly give occasion to a thousand questions; whilst unluckily the poet is not at liberty to answer or explain them, without diverting the attention and distracting the mind still farther. To do it in a full degree, the main object might be wholly eclipsed and lost. To ap-

ply this general doctrine to the present case, what I apprehend shocks in the episode of *Lysander* and *Euanthe*, is, that their situation is not sufficiently explained to justify the impatient passion of the one, and the distressful tenderness of the other; their sentiments, neither improper in themselves, nor improperly expressed, may become so from the situation not being properly explained; and, consequently, the reader or spectator left at liberty to form such ideas of that situation, as his own force of mind suggests to him, which is not always directed by good nature—the very reverse of which is always indulged in subjects where aversion is professedly expected. Another inconveniency attending episodes, is, that the distress they produce seldom coincides or mingles perfectly with the general distress or catastrophe of the piece; and if it does not, it plainly diminishes it in just the same proportion. This inconveniency is hard to be avoided in any episode, unless a very fortunate one indeed; and I am afraid takes place in this of *Lysander* and *Euanthe*, which, in some measure, gives occasion to the other objections; viz. that the catastrophe consists not of one general distress, but of various distresses, each occasioning a different sentiment from each other—for this I apprehend the objection to be. The distress of *Lysander* and *Euanthe* is a different one from that of *Agis* and *Sparta*, through the whole play; and the senti-

ment of compassion different which the mind gives to each. If this is so, they may, perhaps, instead of heightening the sum total of the catastrophe, by taking from each other, rather serve to diminish it. One other cause could possibly be assigned why the catastrophe strikes in this manner, and that is, that Agis's imprisonment, from which period the conspirators might, if they would, have put him to death, may possibly, with some minds, finish the main action in the fourth act; and if this should be so, the deaths of *Agis*, *Lysander*, and *Euanthe*, in the fifth act, may not mark the general catastrophe, or sum total of distress, but appear as so many relations of so many various events, each of which is attended with a different, and not one uniform sentiment. Thus, if the fate of *Sparta* is supposed to be determined in the fourth act, we are left in the fifth to do no more than survey the different ends of those who followed it. We may pity *Euanthe*—pity and applaud *Lysander* for his generosity—approve of *Agis* for his benevolence and stoicism, and detest the others. But the mind is not absorbed in one general passion or sentiment, of which all the particular ones are only so many parts which easily mix and blend together; and such is, and ought to be, the tragic catastrophe.—Those reflections which I have thrown loosely together since I received Mr Pitt's letter, did not, I

own, occur to me before ; both as being no critic in such performances, and for being charmed, as I still am, with every detached scene of your piece, which I look upon as far the best of the kind I have read. But, on finding objections from a quarter for which I have so great deference, I was tempted to try if I could discover where the real strength of them lay; not only as success is scarce to be expected when objections from such people remain ; but, as I know your genius and ability to be such as can easily free this play from them, or compose another as good, where none such shall exist. I will not pretend to answer for the pertness of any of the observations I have made, being quite a novice in those matters ; But, as I write you with great freedom, I not only submit them to you, but at same time what occurs to me ; if you shall be of opinion that either those objections, or what I have said on them, is material. What occurs to me then is this ; that I apprehend, with your genius and facility of composition, you will find it perhaps both an easier, a more agreeable, and a more successful task, to set about composing an entire new piece, where you will be master of the whole, and thereby enabled, with ease, to avoid every objection which has been made; while at the same time you can transfuse the whole of that poetical spirit, truth of character and interest, and beauty of diction, which has been, I will take upon me to say, so justly admired in

this. Should this be your own opinion, I dare say you cannot fail of success; and may, perhaps, obtain as quick a representation for the one, as you could have had for the other; which, meantime, may be laid by to wait a more solemn decision, when critics perhaps may change their minds, as I shall always at least be willing to do mine. One thing you will certainly obtain; that is, a more favourable hearing both from critics and others. What inclines me to this opinion is, that I verily believe, to one of your genius, it is infinitely easier to compose a play, free from such faults as are objected to in *Agis*, than to amend and alter those objected to. Whatever your opinion is, I beg you will write me with freedom; and, above all, without being discouraged; for I think I can answer for your success if you are not. I have got both copies, which I shall dispose of as you direct. All this family is well, and send compliments.

"I am,

"DEAR SIR,

"Yours, with great esteem,

"JAMES OSWALD."

"*Wandsworth*, 15*th June*, 1750."

The suggestion of Mr Pitt was obeyed, and the play materially corrected; but neither the corrections of the author, nor the patronage of those friends, prevailed on Garrick to bring it on the

stage. Afterwards, when the success of *Douglas* had given Mr Home considerable reputation, and principally, I believe, when he had become a favourite and companion of Lord Bute, and through him was patronised by the Prince of Wales, Garrick made no difficulty of bringing out this tragedy, in which he played the part of *Lysander* himself; and though he criticised, in the following letter, parts of the plan of the tragedy, and some of the scenes in detail, his indulgence for the author got the better of his judgment, and he brought out the tragedy without any of the alterations which he had suggested. It is amusing, when one recollects his absolute refusal of this play at a prior period, to peruse this letter, as well as the short note which I read along with the first part of this paper, from that celebrated actor and manager, whom the muses, I am afraid, interested somewhat in proportion as they were in favour at Court.

"*Nov.* 5, 1757.

"My Dear Sir,

"I sit down to write you in the midst of drums, trumpets, and, above all, the roarings of the mighty Bajazet; we are celebrating the glorious and immortal memory as loudly as we can, but I have stole away to say a word to you upon *Agis*. I have read the three acts over and over again; the language and characters in general please me. The subject

itself is of the least dramatic kind, (viz. political and sentimental,) not but there are some affecting scenes in these three acts ; and if your two last are gloriously poetical, I will insure you both fame and profit. I could wish, if you have rough-written the whole, that you would immediately repair to this place, that we might confer upon these matters, for it will be impossible to say every foolish thing I have to say to you by letter. Some of the scenes are rather heavy, particularly that between *Rhesus* and *Euanthe*, and that between *Agis* and *Lysander*, in the second act. I likewise think that *Lysander* comes too suddenly upon the stage, for *Agis* has but just quitted it ; *Euanthe* speaks a soliloquy, then enters *Rhesus*, giving an account of *Lysander's* arrival and victory, and that he was with *Agis*. Now, is it possible to conceive that *Agis* could get to the Senate, meet *Lysander* there, and that the necessary matters between them could be dispatched in the time so short a scene can be performed ? The first scene of the lovers is not, in my opinion, so interesting and affecting as that in the third act, and indeed you'll say that it ought not to be so ; but all I mean is this, that their first scene in the first act is not in proportion so well written and magical as their last, or that in the third act. If you and your friends should think me in this a little too hypercritical, I shall very readily submit to better judgments. But now for something of

more consequence;—surely the reason that *Lysander* gives to *Euanthe*,—(*but I, Euanthe, partial to thy will*, SOUGHT THEE IN VAIN,)—for being shut up in the city, is a very weak one, and almost amounts to the ridiculous. What! not find a lady of her quality, who is under the protection of the king, and lives in the palace? This certainly must be altered.* I was thinking whether the scene between them in the third act might not pass before the gates are shut, and that upon leaving her he finds his going to the camp obstructed by the sudden order of *Amphares*, that then he may return to her in the *helot's* dress, which would very naturally and forcibly bring on the fine capital scene in the third act, between him, her, and *Amphares*. I am speaking at random, and therefore you must make what use you please of these my loose thoughts. Is not there too little matter in the second act? the whole consists of that very long scene between *Agis* and *Lysander*, the entrance of a Senator, the procession, and the soliloquy, (which is a very fine one) of *Amphares*. I cannot as yet see what use we can make of *Sandane*; she is very insignificant hitherto, and unless she has something to do in the two last acts, she will appear to have no business in the tragedy. I am called away, and can only say,

---

* It was, however, not altered.

that the more I read of *Agis*, the more I like it; and if the pathos rises to a proper height in the two last acts, *l'affair est faite*. It will be a most unspeakable pleasure to me to convince you how much I regard and esteem you.

" I am, dear Sir,

" Most sincerely,

" Your friend and very humble servant,

" D. GARRICK.

" Mrs Garrick presents her best compliments to you; she has cry'd at you already. You have written some passages in these three acts, more like Shakespeare than any other author ever did."

Yet the objections of Garrick to this tragedy as a play to be acted, seem to me to be well founded. The two first acts lag so much, and have so much of mere languid declamation, that it would be hardly possible for any performer to keep up the attention of the audience during this pause of the main action, and the barrenness of incident which attends it. The poetry, however, is in general smooth and flowing, and the sentiments striking and well expressed. There is much of the favourite spirit of the author, the admirer of martial glory, in the short speech of *Rhesus*, characterising his brother, the second in command in that Thracian army,

which was to awe the Spartans, and destroy their king:

> " Next in command my brother Euxus stands,
> A youth to Mars devoted; for he loves
> Danger itself, not danger's rich reward."

And the sentiment of *Lysander*, when his prince wishes him to leave him in Sparta, and provide for their future safety by repairing to the army, is happily expressed, without being overloaded, like those of many other dramas, with unnecessary words:—

> " Things past belong to memory alone,
> Things future are the property of hope;
> The narrow line, the isthmus of these seas,
> The instant scarce divisible, is all
> That mortals have to stand on."

Nor is the reflection of the calm and philosophic *Agis* without its peculiar merit, and is sufficiently appropriate both to the character and the situation.

> " In times like these, of a declining state,
> Baseness infects the general race of man;
> But yet these trying times rear up a few
> More excellent, refined, and conscious spirits,
> More principled, and fit for all events,
> Than any in the good, but equal mass,
> Of a far better age."

The following may be thought too bold, and the

figure is somewhat open to ridicule, in respect of the picture which it presents :

——— " On the insect wing
Of a small moment, ride th' eternal fates."

Yet I have heard it admired at the time; and even now, in that vague extravagant sort of sublimity, begotten by Genius upon Nonsense, which has distinguished some recent productions, it would, I doubt not, excite admiration and applause.

In the third act occurs the incident of which, as I have formerly mentioned, the author was so proud, and which Garrick foresaw would strike the audience so much, that in which the villain *Amphares* disarms *Lysander*, by the threat of stabbing his much-loved *Euanthe*, if he continues to resist. Mr Home has repeated it, with scarce any variation, in one of the closing scenes of his *Fatal Discovery*.

The fourth act does not ill sustain, in the importance of its events, and the spirit of its dialogue, the interest which was excited in the third. The Athenian *Lysander*, bred in the academic school, may be excused, when, amidst the perils of his situation, he utters the following philosophical, but generous exclamation :—

——— " If man is like the leaf,
Which, falling from the tree, revives no more,
I shall be shortly dust, that will not hear
Euanthe's grief, nor see the shame of Sparta!

> Now I am a living man, my mind is free;
> And whilst I live and breathe, by Heaven, I'll act
> As if I were immortal!"

One line, uttered by the same person in this scene, attracted the particular applause of the audience, from a circumstance in the conduct of the Seven Years' War, which had then recently happened. Our troops had been foiled in an attempt on the French coast, and the dispatch, if I recollect right, of the commander of that detachment, had mentioned the *danger* which had deterred him from landing, or longer maintaining his position on the coast. In the play, *Euxus* proposes to *Lysander* immediately to leave Sparta, and depart for the army. "Your stay," says he,

> "Your stay is full of danger, risk it not."

Lysander replies,

> "All necessary dangers must be risk'd."

Some one in the pit exclaimed, "*Bellisle*," and there was a loud and continued plaudit.

The fifth act but ill supports the spirit of the two former, though there is some interest excited by the uncertainty which hangs over the fate of *Lysander*, till the scene in which he kills *Amphares*, and rescues *Euanthe*. But the audience, when I saw this piece represented, felt the languor

of its conclusion, and went away not much affected by the death of *Agis*, and with somewhat of indifference about the future fate of the lovers, or of Sparta. To this is probably owing the neglect which it has experienced since its original representation, though certainly superior, in every kind of merit, to many tragedies that have since kept possession of the stage.

I think it probable that the suggestion contained in the criticism of Mr Oswald, which I read a little while ago, was the prompter of our author's idea in writing the tragedy of *Douglas;* for there are among his papers some hints and scraps that seem to have been germs of that tragedy, which bear the appearance of having been set down very near the time when that letter was written. In conformity, perhaps, with the criticism of that letter, he now discarded love from the plan of his drama, and founded it on maternal tenderness—a subject which had employed the ablest dramatic poets, from the earliest times, and which was naturally indeed, from the earliest times, entitled to possession of the stage. He wove it into a story, founded, I believe, on the old Scots ballad of *Gil Morrice*, which had been recited to him by a lady, and which happily suited the bent of his imagination, that loved to dwell amidst the heroic times of chivalry and romantic valour, particularly amidst those in which the great names of our ancient Scottish

Worthies were distinguished. The story, in all its circumstances, was calculated to inflame this sort of imagination, and the incidents which it presented were of an appropriate kind, familiarized to the fancy of a poet of this country, and congenial to its traditional history as well as manners. This seems to me to have been the peculiar felicity which gave Mr Home so great an advantage in the composition of *Douglas*, and raised that drama so much above all his other works. Of this piece there are extant, among those papers which Mr Home's nephew has been so obliging as to put into my hands, more fragments and original sketches, or, as a painter would call them, *studies*, than of any other of Mr Home's productions; and it is curious to observe, how much the after corrections of the poet, probably suggested by the remarks of that very able set of friends and companions to whom he early communicated his piece, have improved it.* Yet the chief scene,

---

* These corrections, it is probable, occasioned the belief, which I remember very current at one time, that the superior excellence of *Douglas*, was owing to the assistance which he received in its composition, from his literary friends.—There is a disposition, (whether from envy or a love of detraction, or merely a sort of pleasure in the discovering of things not commonly known) in the public to impute works to others, instead of their real authors. The same disposition leads to the accusations of plagiarism, so often made on very slight foundations.

one, indeed, which has no equal in modern, and scarcely a superior in ancient drama, that between *Lady Randolph* and *Old Norval*, I have found, on comparing the original sketch with the finished scene in the printed play, to differ scarcely in a word. Thus it is that the fervid creation of genius and fancy strikes out what is so excellent as well as vivid, as not to admit of amendment, and which, indeed, correction would spoil instead of improving. This is the true inspiration of the poet, which gives to criticism instead of borrowing from it, its model and its rule, and which it is possible, in some diffident authors, the terrors of criticism may have weakened or extinguished.

The only part of any great poetical composition, whether in the dramatic or narrative form, which no genius can produce in a hurry, is the plan and progress of the fable. On that the poet, gifted how much soever he may be, must often pause—must consider it in its general effect, as well as in its various parts in detail, in the relation which those parts bear to one another, as well as to nature and probability. He must often look back from the end to the beginning—must measure, as it were, the growth of his characters, from their earliest introduction into the piece, and trace the connexion of the incidents or scenes, from the opening of his story to its final catastrophe. It was this that made

Racine say that his piece was written when he had written out its plan ; yet I am rather of the opinion which I had once occasion to hear Garrick declare, that there is a power in exquisite writing to abate the faults, and to supply the wants of a defective plan ; just as an excellent colourist can soften the errors of his drawing, by the lights and shadows of his painting.

In *Douglas*, there are some defects in the plan and construction of the story ; and one which is a sort of merit in the poet to have produced, is the falling off in the interest in the two last acts ; for I think, on an impartial examination, it will be found, that the incidents, and more particularly the dialogue, in these last acts, go off somewhat coldly, chiefly from the high excitement of the spectator's mind in the scene of the discovery ; and it is also to be attended to, that in a play so often represented, the reader always raises up, even in his study, the picture of the representation—and in the representation, the acting ; especially of that admirable actress who has electrified so many audiences in *Lady Randolph ;* and who, in her interview with the Old Shepherd, has so called forth and exhausted the feelings, as to leave only their languid remains to the future scenes of the play. I think that if allowance be made for those disadvantages, the reader will find, in the dialogue between the

mother and her son, in the fifth act, a degree of tenderness and nature, that in an ordinary tragedy would have been considered excellent. The diction, as well as the delineation of feeling in *Douglas*, seems to me of a very superior kind—sufficiently beautiful, without losing the proper dramatic simplicity, and in a high degree poetical, without any of that obscurity which in many, especially of modern poems, has been mistaken for poetry. Mrs Siddons told me she never found any *study* (which, in the technical language of the stage, means the getting verses by heart) so easy as that of *Douglas*, which is one of the best criterions of excellence in dramatic style. The same great actress, however, complained, that in the opening scenes, even with the retrenchments which she was obliged to make, there was a monotony which she found it extremely difficult to support in the delivery. I apprehend that this remark, which I am persuaded was well founded, was rather a compliment than an objection to the style of the piece; because that sort of level tone which is so difficult to support in scenic representations, is the very voice of nature in those situations of long-nourished settled sorrow, which had been for so many years the constant and cherished companion of *Lady Randolph*.

With such excellence as is now universally allowed to the tragedy of *Douglas*, it was not to be

wondered at that it should produce a strong sensation in Scotland; though I will allow, at the same time, that the public curiosity and expectation were considerably heightened by the peculiar situation of its author, the minister of a church, which, in those times particularly, held stage plays in reprobation. It created a sort of party, as a religious rather than a critical question, and the proceedings, as I have detailed in a former part of this paper, were carried on with a violence which perhaps may surprise us in these more moderate times. This party keenness, however, was favourable, as far as notice and interest are favourable, to the success of the play. But its success did not rest on this ground alone—its poetical merit captivated all who had the good fortune to hear any parts of it recited. I have already mentioned that some of the striking passages, among which I particularly recollect the opening soliloquy, had been got by heart, and were repeated by fair lips, for the admiration of their tea-tables. I may observe in passing, that few opening speeches are more beautiful in poetry, or more interesting in matter; though, perhaps, there is a mistake, not uncommon (observable indeed in other soliloquys of this very tragedy) in its dramatic character, that it tells a great part of *Lady Randolph's* story. Now, one never, I think, strictly speaking, tells a story to one's-self in soliloquy, though one

may reflect on its past, and anticipate its future, consequences.

No part of dramatic composition, however, has been so little regulated either by nature or probability, as that of the *Monologue*. On the French stage, till the time of Voltaire, the soliloquys were not indeed narrative ; but they consisted of a string of high-flown sentiments, artificially expressed, equally unnatural and tiresome. I may be allowed to add, that no part of dramatic language is more difficult to the actor. Garrick appeared to me unrivalled in this department of acting. In speaking soliloquy, in holding those secret and searching dialogues with himself, he not only forgot the audience, but seemed to hold no communion with any thing external. He put off even the ordinary attributes of the character which he represented ; he wrapt in the dark recesses of his soul, the half-conceived thought, the stifled passion, the secret vengeance, the repressed consciousness of crime. In a low and broken tone, in a language almost independent of words, he expressed the abrupt and scarcely connected movements of his mind. In some of those " horrible imaginings," as Shakespeare calls them, which are first developed in soliloquy, from his fixed eye, his contracted and furrowed brow, the silent quivering of his lips, with the low stifled tones they breathed, which, by an art almost peculiar to him-

self, he made audible to the ear, but still more audible to the mind, the impression was powerful beyond measure. 'Twas like the muttering of a volcano, before its fires are seen ; and the audience listened to it with the same deep and silent awe. The Society will scarcely make allowance for this enthusiastic eulogium ; but any of its members who have seen Garrick will understand it.

The episode of the *Hermit*, in the tragedy of *Douglas*, is extremely beautiful, and may be even considered natural in the place where it is introduced. It was one which had probably risen to the poet's mind in his solitary walks on the shores of his parish ; and of which he was so particularly fond, that he has introduced the idea in more than one of his subsequent productions, with the addition, in one of them, of a picturesque image, which would naturally occur to him amidst the scenes of those walks I have mentioned.

> " Here I sit in sorrow,
> Silent and motionless, from morn to eve,
> Till the sea-fowls that skim along the shore,
> Fearless alight, and settling at my feet,
> Scream their wild notes, as if I were a stone,
> A senseless trunk, that could not do them harm."

I have been more full in my remarks on this tragedy, because it was that which gave his celebrity to the author, and continues to be distinguished as

one of the most interesting and pathetic dramas of the modern stage. It is not easy to conceive what could have induced Garrick to reject it when offered to him for representation ; nor did his confidence in his own superior judgment yield even to the experience of its effect in representation at Edinburgh ; it was brought out at Covent-Garden only, the year after it had been acted in Scotland.

Mr David Hume's high opinion of this tragedy, he has told the world in the dedication of a volume of his Essays, published soon after the appearance of *Douglas*, to his friend the author. His remarks when it was first communicated to him in MS. are contained in a letter, part of which has been torn off, of which the residue is as follows :*

---

* In reading this letter, it is necessary to know, that, as the tragedy was first acted, the names of several of the principal characters were different from what they were made in the later representations. *Lord Randolph* was then *Lord Barnet, Lady Randolph,* of course, *Lady Barnet,* and *Norval* was *Forman.* The author's friends soon discovered the want of dignity in the name *Barnet,* from its being the name of the well-known village near London ; and *Forman* was a common sirname of no high rank in Berwickshire.

Mr David Hume's *Remarks on Douglas.*

" 1755, *a* 1756.

" Dear Sir,

" With great pleasure I have more than once perused your tragedy. It is interesting, affecting, pathetic. The story is simple and natural; but what chiefly delights me, is to find the language so pure, correct, and moderate. For God's sake, read Shakespeare, but get Racine and Sophocles by heart. It is reserved to you, and you alone, to redeem our stage from the reproach of barbarism.

" I have not forgot your request to find fault, but as you had neither numbered the pages nor the lines in your copy, I cannot point out particular expressions. I have marked the margin, and shall tell you my opinion when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you. The more considerable objections seem to be these: *Glenalvon's* character is too abandoned. Such a man is scarce in nature; at least, it is inartificial in a poet to suppose such a one, as if he could not conduct his fable by the ordinary passions, infirmities, and vices of human nature. *Lord Barnet's** character is not enough decided; he hovers betwixt vice and virtue, which,

* This name changed to *Randolph*, after the first representation.

though it be not unnatural, is not sufficiently theatrical nor tragic. After *Anna* had lived 18 years with *Lady Barnet,* and yet had been kept out of the secret, there seems to be no sufficient reason why, at that very time, she should have been let into it. The spectator is apt to suspect that it was in order to instruct him; a very good end indeed, but which might have been attained by a careful and artificial conduct of the dialogue.

"There seem to be too many casual rencounters. *Young Forman,** passing by chance, saves *Lord Barnet; Old Forman,* passing that way by chance, is arrested. Why might not *Young Forman* be supposed to be coming to the Castle, in order to serve under *Lord Barnet,* and *Old Forman,* having had some hint of his intention, to have followed him that way?

[Some lines torn off and lost.]

Might not *Anna* be supposed to have returned to her mistress after long absence? This might account for a greater flow of confidence."

If the Society will not think me tedious, I shall be tempted to read in this place two other letters from Mr Hume, the first of which mentions his

---

* Changed to *Norval,* before the tragedy was brought on the stage.

high opinion of *Douglas*, but the second has no relation either to that or any other production of his friend. But it seems to me so delightful in itself, and is so genuine a specimen of the writer's admirable talent for epistolary composition, that I own I reckoned myself fortunate in being permitted to allow the society a perusal of it. It will not be valued the less for being altogether on a private subject, evidently written without the most distant view to publication, or even to general perusal.

To Mrs Dysart, *at Eccles, (a much valued relation of* Mr D. Hume,) *with a book—the first part of his History of England.*

" 9*th October*, [1754.]

" Dear Madam,

"As I send you a long book, you will allow me to write you a short letter, with this fruit of near two years very constant application, my youngest and dearest child. You should have read it sooner, but during the fine weather, I foresaw that it would produce some inconvenience; either you would attach yourself so much to the perusal of me as to neglect walking, riding, and field diversions, which are much more beneficial than any history; or if this beautiful season tempted you, I must lie in a corner, neglected and forgotten. I assure you I would

take the pet if so treated. Now, that the weather has at last broke, and long nights are joined to wind and rain, and that a fire-side has become the most agreeable object, a new book, especially if wrote by a friend, may not be unwelcome. In expectation then, that you are to peruse me first with pleasure, then with ease, I expect to hear your remarks, and Mr Dysart's, and the Solicitor's.* Whether am I Whig or Tory? Protestant or Papist? Scotch or English? I hope you do not all agree on this head, and that there are disputes among you about my principles. We never see you in town, and I never can get to the country; but I hope I preserve a place in your memory.

"I am,

"DEAR MADAM,

"Your affectionate friend and servant,

"DAVID HUME.

"*P.S.*—I have seen John Hume's new unbaptized play,† and it is a very fine thing. He now discovers a great genius for the theatre.

---

* Mr Home, a relation of the Historian, then Solicitor-General for Scotland.

† I presume this was *Douglas*; and the expression, "he now discovers a great genius for the theatre," I suppose was meant to imply Mr D. Hume's opinion of its being better fitted for the stage than *Agis*.

[*Written at the top.*]—"I must beg of you not to lend the book out of your house, on any account, till the middle of November;* any body may read it in the house."

To Mrs Dysart.

"*Ninewells, March* 19*th*, 1751.

"Dear Madam,

"Our friend at last plucked up a resolution, and has ventured on that dangerous encounter. He went off on Monday morning, and this is the first action of his life wherein he has engaged himself without being able to compute exactly the consequences. But what arithmetic will serve to fix the proportion between good and bad wives, and rate the different classes of each? Sir Isaac Newton himself, who could measure the courses of the planets, and weigh the earth as in a pair of scales, —even he had not algebra enough to reduce that amiable part of our species to a just equation; and they are the only heavenly bodies whose orbits are as yet uncertain.

"If you think yourself too grave a matron to

* I suppose the time of its publication in London.

have this florid part of the speech addressed to you, pray lend it to the collector, and he will send it to Miss Nancy.

"Since my brother's departure, Katty and I have been computing in our turn, and the result of our deliberation is, that we are to take up house in Berwick; where, if arithmetic and frugality don't deceive us, (and they are pretty certain arts) we shall be able, after providing for hunger, warmth, and cleanliness, to keep a stock in reserve, which we may afterwards turn either to the purposes of hoarding, luxury, or charity. But I have declared beforehand against the first. I can easily guess which of the other two you and Mr Dysart will be most favourable to. But we reject your judgment; for nothing blinds one so much as inveterate habits.

"My compliments to his Solicitorship. Unfortunately I have not a horse at present to carry my fat carcase, to pay its respects to his superior obesity. But if he finds travelling requisite either for his health or the Captain's, we shall be glad to entertain him here as long as we can do it at another's expence; in hopes we shall soon be able to do it at our own.

Pray tell the Solicitor that I have been reading lately, in an old author called *Strabo*, that in some cities of ancient Gaul, there was a fixed legal standard, established for corpulency, and that the senate kept a measure, beyond which, if any belly presu-

med to increase, the proprietor of that belly was obliged to pay a fine to the public, proportionable to its rotundity. Ill would it fare with his worship and I, [me] if such a law should pass our parliament; for I am afraid we are already got beyond the statute.

"I wonder, indeed, no harpy of the treasury has ever thought of this method of raising money. Taxes on luxury are always most approved of; and no one will say, that the carrying about a portly belly is of any use or necessity. 'Tis a mere superfluous ornament, and is a proof too, that its proprietor enjoys greater plenty than he puts to a good use; and, therefore, 'tis fit to reduce him to a level with his fellow subjects, by taxes and impositions.

"As the lean people are the most active, unquiet, and ambitious, they every where govern the world, and may certainly oppress their antagonists whenever they please. Heaven forbid that Whig and Tory should ever be abolished, for then the nation might be split into fat and lean, and our faction, I am afraid, would be in piteous taking. The only comfort is, if they oppressed us very much, we should at last change sides with them.

"Besides, who knows if a tax were imposed on fatness, but some jealous divine might pretend, that the church was in danger.

"I cannot but bless the memory of Julius Cæsar, for the great esteem he expressed for fat men,

and his aversion to lean ones. All the world allows, that that emperor was the greatest genius that ever was, and the greatest judge of mankind.

"But I should ask your pardon, dear Madam, for this long dissertation on fatness and leanness, in which you are no way concerned; for you are neither fat nor lean, and may indeed be denominated an arrant trimmer. But this letter may all be read to the Solicitor; for it contains nothing that need be a secret to him. On the contrary, I hope he will profit by the example; and, were I near him, I should endeavour to prove as good an encourager as in this other instance. What can the man be afraid of? The Mayor of London had more courage who defied the hare.

"But I am resolved sometime to conclude, by putting a grave epilogue to a farce, and telling you a real serious truth, that I am, with great esteem,

"DEAR MADAM,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) DAVID HUME."

"*P.S.*—Pray let the Solicitor tell Frank,* that he is a bad correspondent—the only way in which he can be a bad one, by his silence."

The next tragedy which Mr Home composed was that of the *Siege of Aquileia*, of which Mr

* The late Dr Francis Home of Edinburgh.

Garrick (as I have mentioned in the chronological account of the representations of the author's plays,) entertained the most favourable opinion, and anticipated the most brilliant success. In that expectation he was disappointed, from the circumstance formerly noticed, of the distress being chiefly produced by narrative, instead of the livelier means of representation. But, even exclusive of that circumstance, it seems to me that this tragedy, neither as a drama or a poem, is calculated to affect or to please nearly so much as either Douglas or some of his other pieces. There are not those bursts of real and overpowering passion with which the audience sympathises and is moved. The words in some degree overwhelm the feeling, and we read verses which indeed contain beautiful and sublime sentiments, but which speak rather than exhibit those contending emotions of the soul, of which the genuine expression in such situations marks the inspired mind, and the deep conscious skill of the tragic poet. *Emilius* reminds us of Cato, but it is Cato the orator, rather than Cato the patriot and the father; yet the contrast between the firmness of Roman virtue in *Emilius*, and the yearnings of a mother's heart in *Cornelia*, might, I think, in the hands of such an actress as Mrs Cibber was, have had a powerful effect on the stage, if there had been more of compression in the words, and of picture in the scene. In its present state, it would exhaust the powers of the most unwearied actress, to sup-

port the part of *Cornelia* as it ought to be supported; and this is probably the reason why it has never been acted (as far as I know,) since its first representation in London, in 1760.

The *Fatal Discovery* was the next production of his muse, which, though indifferently received at the time of its appearance, and now almost forgotten, I am inclined to think, in point of poetry, and indeed of pathos, the next to his *Douglas*. The subject had probably dwelt on his mind ever since his meeting at Moffat with James M'Pherson, whom, as is well known, he encouraged to make a tour in the Highlands and Islands, to collect the ancient Gaelic poetry, of which M'Pherson had translated fragments to Mr Home, when at that watering-place. From one of those fragments, the subject of this tragedy was taken, and the names of the persons in the poem are preserved in the play. Garrick was of my mind as to its merit, as appears from the following letter:

"*Hampstead, June* 6, 1768.

"My dear Friend,

"I never sat down to write to you with more pleasure than I do at present. I have read *Rivine* again and again, and every time with greater pleasure. I could not send it to you so soon as I promised, because I was resolved to get rid of all my theatrical cares, which I did not, on account of the

Princess's death, till last Tuesday, when I finished the season with *Hamlet*, and never played that character so well in all my life. But to return to our precious *Rivine*. How happy am I that I did not give you the copy till I had considered it with all my wits about me! It is a most *interesting*, *original*, *noble* performance; and whenever it is exhibited, will do the author great, very great honour.

"If your fifth act (as a fifth act,) is equal to the rest, *sublimi feries*, &c. The construction of your fable is excellent; you leave the audience, at the end of every act, with a certain glow, and in the most eager expectation of knowing what is to follow. I drew the tears last night in great plenty from my wife, and a very intimate friend of ours, who is now with us at Hampstead. I read it with all my powers, and produced that effect which I would always wish to do in reading a work of genius, and more particularly a work of yours.

"I shall give the copy to Dr Blair to-morrow morning, for he and Dr Robertson do me the honour to breakfast with me. The literary world, notwithstanding our present unaccountable confusion, are in the highest expectation of Dr Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*.

"I will not descend from my present exaltation about you, to point out some little trifling objections I have here and there in your tragedy; they

are of very little consequence, and if just, can be altered in a morning. I find your friend Dr Blair knows of it, and though I have not yet opened my lips to him upon it, I will talk it over with him to-morrow, by ourselves. I have filled my paper, and my heart and mind are full about you. I shall ever love and esteem you, though I were never to see you again; for 'friendship never dies.'—*Act* 4 *Scene* 1.

"Yours,

"Ever and most affectionately,

"D. GARRICK.

"Pray let me have the fifth act soon, and a complete copy, that I may give it another reading. What are your designs about it? Pray tell me, and tell it me in a hand that does not gallop quite so fast as your imagination."

Mr Home's next succeeding performance was the tragedy of *Alonzo*, brought out at Drury-Lane in 1773. This tragedy, though written at a considerable distance of time, has more both of the style and story of *Douglas*, than any other of the poet's dramas, but both are much inferior to those of that excellent tragedy. There are a great many passages in *Alonzo* so closely resembling those of its sister-play, that the author could hardly have ventured to set them down, if his memory had served him to

recal those which he had formerly written. Thus the young *Alberto*, the unacknowleged son of the heroine *Ormisinda*, begins the story of his life :—

> " Alberto is my name, I drew my breath
> From Catalonia ; in the mountains there
> My father dwells, and for his own domains
> Pays tribute to the Moor. He was a soldier.
> Oft have I heard him of your battles speak,
> Of Cavadonga's and Olalla's fields ;
> But ever since I can remember aught,
> His chief employment and delight have been
> To train me to the use and love of arms.
> — — — —
> " Meanwhile, my bosom beat for nobler game ;
> I long'd in arms to meet the foes of Spain.
> Oft I implored my father to permit me,
> Before the truce was made, to join the host."

And the King's reply is nearly in the words of *Lord Randolph* to his young deliverer :—

> " Thou art a prodigy, and fill'st my mind
> With thoughts profound, and expectations high."

And in another place, the King, in words exactly like those of *Lady Randolph*, says,—

> ——— " Rise, Alberto,
> To me no thanks are due ; a greater king,
> The King of Kings I deem, hath chosen thee
> To be the champion of his law divine."

Ormisinda's admiration of her son, and compari-

son of him with his father, are expressed exactly as *Lady Randolph* expresses the same feelings:—

> " Is he not like him? mark his coming forth—
> Behold Alonzo in his daring son,
> Full of the spirit of his warlike sire;
> His birth unknown, he felt his princely mind,
> Advanced undaunted on the edge of war,
> And claimed the post of danger for his own."

And, in the next act,

> " Then tell him of his son to wring his heart!
> Truly describe the boy, how brave he was!
> How beautiful!—How, from the cloud obscure
> In which his careful mother had involved him,
> He burst, the champion of his native land."

There is likewise, though the author had long ceased to exercise any of his clerical functions, the same imitation of the Bible.

" Oft," says the stripling *Alberto*, almost in the very words of David, when speaking of Goliah,—

> ———" Oft have I kill'd
> The wolf, the boar, and the wild mountain-bull,
> For sport and pastime. Shall this Moorish dog
> Resist me fighting in my country's cause?

And again,

> " The God of Battles, whom Abdallah serves,
> Has overthrown the infidel, whose trust
> Was in his own right arm."

There is in many passages of this play the same animated poetry which is found in *Douglas;* but there are many more blemishes in the language to balance these. The following is an image of much grandeur, comparing to a sublime natural phenomenon the mysterious progress of the hero of the piece:

———" I judge it is Alonzo.
Shrouded in anger, and in deep disdain,
Like some prime planet in eclipse he moves,
Gazed at and fear'd."

And in the next scene, the simile, illustrative of a mind uncertain of its future destiny, is natural and beautiful.

" But hope and fear alternate sway my soul,
Like light and shade upon a waving field,
Coursing each other, when the flying clouds
Now hide, and now reveal the sun of heaven."

It is difficult to conceive the same author, but a few pages after, writing such prosaic lines as the following:—

" There never was,
Nor will there ever, while the world endures,
Be found a parallel to my distress."

" His eyes, his ears are shut. Oft have I sent
Letters that would have pierced a heart of stone."

"A mace he wields,
Whose sway resistless breaks both shield and arm,
And crushes head and helmet."

"Has this youth no name? Hast thou not heard
How he is called?"

"You start and shudder like a man
Struck with a heavy blow."

"He did not deign to look upon the present,
But stretch'd his sun-burnt hands straight out before
him,
Like a blind man, and would have stood so still,
Had I not made his fingers feel the pearls."

"Why should I fear to see a grave-clad ghost,
Who may so soon be number'd with the dead,
And be a ghost myself."*

"Then forward sprung, and on the mighty shield
Discharged a mighty blow, enough to crush
A wall, or split a rock."

"The years, the months, the weeks, the very days,
Are reckon'd, register'd, recorded there.
And of that period I could cite such times,
So dolorous, distressful, melancholy,
That the bare mention of them would excite
Amazement how I live to tell the tale."

---

* Our national vanity must confess the same wretched quibble in one of the most interesting scenes of Shakespeare's Hamlet:

"Unhand me, gentlemen!
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him who lets me!"

Lines which (with reverence to Shakespeare be it said) I think it might be judicious to leave out in the acting.

And in that well known defiance of Alonzo, conceived in the very slang of a bruiser.

> " I'll fight you both,*
> Father and son at once."

Nor is there less a want of propriety and good-taste in the allusion to the hackneyed story in Ovid, in the midst of a mother's anguish:—

> " You know not what you do, unhappy both!
> This combat must not, nor it shall not be;
> The sun in heaven would backward turn his course,
> And shrink from such a spectacle as this,
> More horrid than the banquet of Thyestes."

With all its imperfections, however, this tragedy had much greater success in the representation than any of Mr Home's other plays, *Douglas* excepted. It owed, perhaps, great part of that success to the exertions of Mrs Barry, then in the very zenith of her theatrical fame, for whom Mr Home, in a preface which sufficiently speaks his exultation at the applause which his play received, says he wrote the

---

* When Mr Woods, a favourite actor on our Edinburgh stage, brought out this tragedy for his benefit, I suggested a slight transposition of the words, that took off something from the vulgarity of expression—

> " Both will I fight,
> Father and son at once."

part of *Ormisinda*, a confession which speaks more of policy than dignity in the poet.

Of his latest tragedy, *Alfred*, I am unwilling to speak. His friend, our venerable associate, Dr Adam Ferguson, thus accounts for its failure:

" *Edinburgh, February* 7, 1778.

" My dear John,

" Damn the actors that have damned the play, and think no more of it till you have time to do what may be necessary for the press, and then consider what is to be done with it. Besides the accidents you mention, I can conceive that the substitution of a love-interest for an interest of state, which the audience expected from the name of Alfred, may have baulked them; when they appeared to languish, you certainly did right to withdraw it.

* * * * * *

" I am,

" Dear John,

" Most affectionately yours,

" Adam Ferguson."

But in truth, its own want of interest in the plot, and of poetry in the dialogue, are quite sufficient, without any other cause, to account for the unfavourable reception it met with. There was an uniform mediocrity in the language, an uniform tameness and want of discrimination in the characters,

sufficient, without the national feeling of the debasement of the great *Alfred* into the hero of a love-plot, to tire, if not to disgust an audience.

Another tragedy I find among his papers, of the composition of which I am unable to fix the date, but I presume it was at a later period than that of *Alfred;* its title is *Alina,* or the *Maid of Yarrow,* and it is founded on a fabulous story, of which the time is supposed to be that of the Crusade of St Louis ; but the persons are Scots, and the scene is laid on the Borders of Scotland. This story, being of a sort adapted to kindle those national and heroic feelings of which Mr Home was so susceptible, one would have thought might have roused his genius to something of the same excellence which his *Douglas* possesses; but it is very deficient in all the qualities which give force or interest to dramatic composition, and the principal female character, *Alina,* marked with nothing to distinguish or to adorn it, and not placed in any situation in which the ablest actress could make it attractive. Yet the author seems to have been fond of it, for he has made a number of corrections and alterations. An anonymous friend, to whose judgment he appears to have submitted this play, has written an elaborate criticism (as far as can be judged by the fragment of that criticism which exists among Mr Home's papers,) upon every scene of it. But no amendment which criticism could suggest, could possibly

give it interest with the reader or with an audience; it has the most irremediable of all faults, a want of that vigour and creative force of genius for which a number of faults is easily forgiven. By the author's partiality, two fair copies of it were made by two different amanuenses; but it was never acted, and will probably never be published.

I found, in a more imperfect form, two acts of an unfinished play, to which the author has affixed no title, but which is founded on an East-Indian story, and turns on the invasion of Hindoostan, by a Tartar Prince, who is in love with the daughter of a Rajah, whose hand her father, as well as her own affections, had bestowed upon another. From the two acts which were written, it does not seem to promise any excellence that should make one regret its not being finished. It is probable the story was suggested by Mr Home's intimacy with the author of *Zingis*, for which tragedy Mr Home wrote the prologue. *Zingis* was brought out, I think, about the year 1780.

If I am right in supposing the time of writing these two tragedies to have been as late as that year, it was after Mr Home had met with the very serious accident of a fall from his horse, which had nearly cost him his life, and which certainly, though it did not affect his intellect, impaired both the power of his genius and the discrimination of his taste; and this circumstance may easily account

for their inferiority to his earlier productions. Another dramatic work, written however at a much earlier period of his life, (for I see mention made of it in a letter from Mr James M'Pherson, in 1774,) is indeed of so inferior a kind, and so utterly unworthy of Mr Home, that I should not have mentioned it at all, but for that obligation which biographical truth imposes on me. This is a comedy called the *Surprise;* or, *Who would have Thought it?* It is a tame and spiritless dialogue, without any wit, or even sentiment, to give pleasure to the reader, or any incident in the scenes to give amusement on the stage. It might have fairly been doubted indeed, even without this proof, if Mr Home, even in his most vigorous days, or in his happiest moods of composition, could have produced a good *comedy*. Though his conversation was always pleasing, and frequently amusing, from the anecdotes with which his memory was furnished; yet he appeared to me not endowed with that vivacity or creative humour fitted to inspire comedy. His very epilogues are always grave and serious, even with a cast of melancholy; and I have rarely found in any of the fragments of his composition, or in his letters, any sparks of humour or of gaiety.

I have taken up so much of the Society's time, that I cannot encroach upon it more at present by reading some of the correspondence which passed

between Mr Home and his friends, among whom were some men whose letters the Society would hear with considerable interest. If they think it worth while to afford me another evening, or part of another evening, I may accomplish that purpose, or attempt another, which I conceived on comparing Mr Home's poetry with that of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries. This comparison induced me to take a short review of the older dramatists of England, who wrote before the poets of the era immediately preceding Mr Home; I was thence imperceptibly led to a consideration of the general state of poetry in this country, and that change which it has undergone in recent times; but several interruptions, both of leisure and of health, have hitherto prevented my finishing those remarks. If I can render them any way deserving the attention of the Society, I will take the liberty of reading them at some subsequent meeting.

APPENDIX

TO

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

OF

MR HOME,

CONSISTING OF

LETTERS TO AND FROM HIS FRIENDS.

I AM sorry to find myself considerably disappointed in the Letters which I hoped to lay before the Society, as an Appendix to the Account of Mr Home's Life. In looking carefully over those with which his nephew, Mr John Home, was so kind as to furnish me, I found much fewer than I had expected of sufficient consequence to induce me to read them in this place. This was owing, I believe, to the circumstance which I mentioned formerly, of Mr Home's careless habit with regard to papers, particularly during the concluding years of his life,

There are still, however, some letters which I think will interest the Society, both from the characters of the writers, and the subjects to which they relate. These I will read in the order of their dates, as far as that order allows of dividing them into the subjects of the narrative which I formerly submitted to the Society, taking first those which relate to the early period of Mr Home's life, the openings of his genius, and its subsequent developement in the productions of his muse; next, those which have reference to the patronage, I might rather say the warm attachment, of Lord Bute, his connexion with whom had the most important effects on his circumstances and situation; and, if the Society's time or patience will allow, I shall conclude by submitting to it some letters from, and relating to, his illustrious friend Mr David Hume, chiefly written towards the close of that celebrated author's life.

One thing I may fairly say, and with the most perfect sincerity, that there is not one sentence of all that correspondence which I have perused, however private or confidential, that does not afford the strongest proof of those amiable dispositions, that warmth of heart, that cordiality of friendship, that perfect disinterestedness with regard to himself, and generosity with regard to others, which I have formerly mentioned as belonging particularly to the character of Mr Home.

The first letter that I shall read is one addressed to me by our venerable colleague, Dr Adam Ferguson, giving some account of his early acquaintance with Mr Home, and of their respective occupations. He apologises for its defects in point of information, from a circumstance, which, however, will increase its interest with us,—the very advanced age, and peculiar situation of the writer.

"*St Andrews, June* 3, 1812.

"My dear Sir,

"I am sorry to feel that I can do but little to supply the defects of your materials, in framing the intended Memoir relating to the life of my very particular friend John Home. My intimacy with him began at College, about the year 1743, or 44. I left Scotland in the summer 1745, did not return till the year 1751, and had no fixed residence in Scotland till near 1760, and my recollection of transactions, or rather of dates, within this whole period, is very imperfect, and even perplexed.

"As to Mr Home's early visits to London, I heard of one in company with some of Mr Adams' family, and believe it was then he met with his repulse from Garrick, and made his address to Shakespeare's monument. I know not whether he was then presented to Lord Bute, but have heard of his interviews with Mr Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham. His openness, ardour, and warmth of

heart, recommended him equally to Mr Pitt and Lord Bute; but the political difference which arose and increased betwixt these personages, lost him the one in the same degree as he acquired the other.

"It was, I think, in his first visit to London, he fell in with Collins the poet, perhaps introduced by Mr Barrow, who, as you suppose, was his fellow adventurer in the Castle of Doune, and continued through life his warm and affectionate friend, as I too experienced by Home's recommendation. Home's access to Lord Bute procured Barrow the office of pay-master to the army, during the American war, where scores of millions passed through his hands, and left him returning to England, I believe, nearly as poor as he went.

"I lived, as you suppose, with Mr Home, at Braid, a farm-house two miles south of Edinburgh; but as to the date, I can say nothing, but suppose it may have been after the first representation of *Douglas* at Edinburgh, and after he was far gone in the favour of Lord Bute.

"I remember he was then much engaged in versifying, but cannot say what. I think, but may be mistaken, it was in some changes or amendments wished by Lord Bute, in the tragedy of *Agis;* and even in concert with Garrick, who was beginning to regard the influence of Lord Bute more than he had formerly regarded the applications of Home. I

am by no means qualified to mention what different subjects, or works, Mr Home attempted or executed, as I myself, during the busiest time of his life, was much engaged abroad, sometimes in the Low Countries, in Germany, Switzerland, and even in America. As to any attempt of his in comedy, I never heard of any such thing; and, if the public are not much interested to know the failures as well as successes of literary men, I should be willing to have the attempt in comedy you mention entirely suppressed, as one of the mistakes we commit in moments of dulness or error.

"As to what you call the party at Moffat, I cannot pretend to recollect the date to which it may be referred. I believe it was not any concerted party. John Home was there by himself—lived at the Ordinary—and met with James M'Pherson at the Bowling-Green. M'Pherson was there with his pupil, young Graham of Balgoun, [now Lord Lynedoch,] living with his mother, Lady Christian Graham, at her brother, Lord Hopetoun's house, in that village. What passed between John Home and James M'Pherson, I soon after heard of; and had no doubt it was a continuation of what had passed frequently betwixt Home and myself, on the subject of reported traditionary poetry in the Highlands. There was another Highlander there, who, as well as Mr Home, I understood, obtruded on M'Pher-

son with inquiries on that subject. M'Pherson confirmed the reports; and being asked whether he could exhibit any specimens, said he was possessed of several; and on Home's wishing to have some translation, M'Pherson agreed, and furnished him with some of those *fragments* which were afterwards printed in a pamphlet, and drew that public attention which gave rise to the further proceeding on the subject.

"David Hume was not at Moffat when these interviews with M'Pherson took place; he was, you know, a professed sceptic, and cannot properly be said to have ever formally affirmed or denied the authenticity or imposture of the poetry in question. He began, and continued to call for evidence—perhaps for more evidence than the circumstances of the case could admit; but this, you know, is the essence of scepticism;—to most men, day-light is sufficient evidence that the sun is rising or risen; but the sceptic would always have more, even if the rays were vertical.

"As to the project and subscription which afterwards took place, to dispatch M'Pherson to collect more poetry in the Highlands, I was not then in Scotland, nor heard of it till some time afterwards.

"Mr Home certainly never entertained any doubt that the original of Mr M'Pherson's translations was traditionary in the Highlands.

"As to the society he mostly frequented at London, you seem to be sufficiently informed. Lord Bute generally treated him with an uncommon degree of affection; their minds were much at unison in all the sentiments of admiration or contempt. The sphere of attentions paid to Mr Home at London, no doubt extended after the representation of *Douglas;* but I have ever since been too little in London to be apprised of particulars for your information; and as to the defects of what you might expect from me on the subject of this letter in general, I trust you will forgive it, being now for many years declining, while you and many other younger men are advancing in knowledge and power.

"I am visited sometimes by Dempster, who is possibly too old for your acquaintance, but I call him a younker, being myself about to enter on my ninetieth year.

"I am,
"My DEAR SIR,
"With great esteem,
"Your most obedient, and most
"Humble servant,
"ADAM FERGUSON."

Part of a Letter from Mr HOME, *to a Friend, giving a humorous Account of himself, after recovering from a severe fit of the Toothache; concluding with a Description of* BLACKLOCK, *the blind poet.*

" DEAR SIR,

" I FANCY my letter last week would puzzle you strangely, and make it hard for you to divine the fate of the china and the wig, (for a wig was got by George's care;) but by the inexcusable neglect of the china merchant, who undertook to send them with some other boxes that were going for Dunse, they have both lain in his shop all this week. I should be extremely sorry if I thought that this disappointment had given as much pain to Mrs Home or you, as it has done to me.

" Yesterday I was out for the first time, having been obliged, after a number of tormenting successless remedies, to draw the tooth where the pain was seated, which has relieved me for this bout. I am now what one, at first sight, would call a polite fellow, being much thinner and paler than usual; and when I am dressed in my folio coat, I very much resemble those *petit maitres* that are pictured on the frontispieces of Moliere's plays. My spirits were so low for some time, that the taste for reading, and even for arguing with my companions, was

sunk to a degree that alarmed me with fears of its never rising more; for, in my severest intervals, I could not attend to the most easy deductions of reason, but I am now in a more hopeful way, and soon

> Shall wonted ardour in my bosom burn,
> And the fierce spirit of dispute return.

"As soon as I went to town, I called at your carrier, and though I repeated my visit, found he had nothing for me; after which, I went to a companion's, and sent for the *blind poet*,* who is really a strange creature to look at; a small, weakly, under thing—a chilly, bloodless animal, that shivers at every breeze. But if nature has cheated him in one respect, by assigning to his share, forceless sinews, and a ragged form, she has made him ample compensation on the other, by giving him a mind endued with the most exquisite feelings—the most ardent kindled up affections; a soul (to use a poet's phrase) that's tremblingly alive all over; in short, he is the most flagrant enthusiast I ever saw; when he repeats verses, he is not able to keep his seat, but springs to his feet, and shews his rage by the most animated motions. He has promised to let me have copies of his best poems, which I'll transmit to you whenever he is as good as his word. In

* Dr Blacklock.

the meantime, as small fish are better than none, you will accept of the inclosed Ode on Mercenary Love, which was shewn to Blacklock by an acquaintance of mine, along with some others, and by him preferred to the rest. Receive with this, Parnell, Gaff, and Virtot's Revolutions of Portugal, which Mrs Home will accept instead of a compliment written especially to her. Pray let me hear from you next week.

Three Letters from Mr Home to Dr Carlyle; written from London, when smarting under his disappointment of not getting his Tragedy of Agis brought on the Stage.

It were trite to say, after its being concentrated into the adage—"*genus irritabile vatum*," that the same sensibility which inspires excellence in poetry, gives proportional acuteness to the pains of neglect and disappointment; but it may be fair to remark, on the other hand, that this irritability (which I cannot bring myself to call unfortunate) frequently aggravates the neglect much beyond what it would appear to soberer minds, who give themselves leisure to consider all the circumstances of the case. I wish this qualifying remark to accompany our author's account of the reception of his play by one person, at least, of most respectable character, whom

other muses acknowledged as their most benevolent patron and supporter. The same kind of feeling which I have ventured to ascribe to poets, makes persons of genius contemptuous of ordinary men, especially when their youth and inexperience, "fresh from the classic walks of Greece and Rome," prevent their justly appreciating the use of such characters. Poets, beyond all other men, live amidst a creation of their own, where the castle-building of their fancy smooths every thing around them, without ever supposing any of those obstructions which they must infallibly meet with when they come to jostle amidst the realities of the world. They are catched, if I may be allowed the expression, with the polished part of the fabric of human life;—they forget how indispensible are the less showy materials that compose the rubble work of the building. With these prefatory observations, I may venture to read the two following letters, without detracting from that philanthropy and milk of human kindness, for which, in truth, Mr Home was so remarkable:—

"*London, 6th November,* ——

"DEAR CARLISLE,

"I DID not write to you upon the road, because I was in no spirits, having travelled about one half of the road alone; besides, I had nothing very material to report of Marchmont's criticisms; he ex-

tolled the spirit and characters of the piece, but objected to the bloodiness of the catastrophe, and to the want of regularity and sequence of the scenes. As to the first of these objections, I know that the most applauded plays on earth are as bloody, and ought not to be less so. As to the suite of the scenes, the strictness of it would spoil almost every fable, and I think that I have enough of it. Blair and Maghie are to read it this night and to-morrow, after whose judgment I shall shew it to Littleton. I have seen nobody yet but Smollett, whom I like very well.

* * * * * *

" I am a good deal disappointed at the mien of the English, which I think but poor. I observed it to Smollett, after having walked at High-Mall, who agreed with me.

* * * * * *

" Westminster Abbey is the only object to my content. I believe that I shall be very much there at my leisure hours. I contemn all the buildings that I have seen, except a chapel called the Banquetting-house, which is admirable. I shall write Logan as soon as I have seen the lions and other pagans that reside in this city. The people here

are incredibly surprised to see a raw Scotchman so little surprised, and so well acquainted with all that he sees.

"JOHN HOME."

"MY DEAR CARLISLE,

"I HAVE long delayed writing to you, in expectation of writing what might be agreeable with regard to myself, or interesting as to others. I cannot say that I will at this present time do either of these, but I do not think it is fit I should be longer silent. Know, then, that as to myself, I have met with one disappointment. After having made some alterations in my play, and turned out some Scotticisms, or vulgarities as they were termed, Mr Littleton refused to read it, because if he did not approve it, he would be pained in saying so, and if he did, he would be put to as much trouble in supporting it, as he was last winter in carrying through *Coriolanus*, which, with all his interest, he hardly could make run for nine nights, for which reason he would not read a tragedy as a judge, nor engage in it as a patron, if it was writt by his own brother. I was also told, that it was not to be expected that any young man could write a tragedy better than Mr Thomson, who was the greatest poet of the age, (a brother of Littleton's, a dignified clergyman, told me all this pleasing matter,)—I bowed, and answered, 'that Mr Thomson was a

descriptive poet.' I thanked the gentleman for his civilities, and walked off with less appearance of chagrin than you will think possible. I thought at first that Littleton had read the play, and took this gentle way of dismissing me; but upon putting that, and desiring to know the worst, this parson, who I believe fears God, (though perhaps he may be a little Arminian,) assured me most solemnly, 'that Mr Littleton had not read it, and that he himself did not pretend to be a judge in these matters, having addicted himself to the study of natural history; however, that he would have read it for all that, if it had not been his extraordinary business in attending upon the King as chaplain.' You see what people I have to deal with; I am only vexed that I applied to them. I could divide my body into two, and go to buffets with myself, for having solicited a dish of skimmed milk, (as Hotspur says,) in such an honourable action. I believe I need hardly tell you, that Maghie, Blair, and Barrow, judged of *Agis* as Logan, Blair, and you have done. I cannot help telling you that one Englishman, after extolling the genius of the piece, added, 'that the author had formed himself too much upon Thomson's Seasons, and Lee's plays.' I could not have been more surprised if he had said that I had formed myself upon Euclid's Elements, and M'Laurin's Fluxions. The genius of this nation is really a little gross; by what I can see of

their public buildings, their entertainments, and their conversations, the plumb-pudding, and butter-sauce, makes their intellectuals boggy. However, I have met with some charming fellows amongst them,—Oxonians that were republicans, and citizens that were patterns of taste. *

* * * * * *

Your friend Smollett, who has a thousand good, nay, the best qualities, and whom I love much more than he thinks I do, has got on Sunday last three hundred pounds for his *Mask*. * *

* * * * * *

"JOHN HOME."

"MY DEAR CARLISLE,

"I ADDRESS this to you with pleasure, as it will certify you of the more favourable state of my affairs, and that I hope to set out in a few days with assurance, if not certainty, of my plays being acted next winter. Kay, to whose cousin, Oswald, I am infinitely obliged, will tell you the particulars. I know your good sense and affection for me to be both so great, as that you will easily excuse the neglects in writing from a man like me, whose mind was torn with anxiety, shame, and indignation. I have now recovered my spirits and begun to write to my friends, the moment that it is not painful for me to write, and for them to receive my letters. Before I go any further, I desire you to make my

compliments,—(but that's a cursed word,)—to present my most respectful and affectionate remembrance to your father and mother, who I doubt not have often wondered at my silence. I delayed from post to post, because every day I expected to be the harbinger of better tidings. * * * * * * * * * * *

I can't write to you about London as I do to other people to whom every thing is news. You know it better than I do, and we shall compare notes plentifully. I must acquaint you, that I found [torn off.] which is a most excellent place, neither are the chop-houses to be despised; only the people here in general are so execrably stupid, that there is no conversing with them, and their men of learning such shallow monsters, that I am always obliged to be upon my guard, lest I should really shock, or seem to insult them. I sometimes hearken to the coffee-house conversations upon poetry and politics, where there are such fellows authors, whose wigs are worth three pounds sterling, that it is ready to make a man of moderate patience 'Curse his better angel from his side, and fall to reprobation.'

"JOHN HOME."

I am now to read three letters from Mr James M'Pherson, who at that time, I believe, was a sort of editor or manager of some newspapers in the interest of government, because they relate to an event which the national pride of this country sets down as a very extraordinary one, the combined fleets of France and Spain cruizing in the British Channel, and threatening to cover an invasion, and exhibit the feeling of the country on that event. One cannot help comparing that with the alarm afterwards felt from the preparations for a French invasion, and contrasting therewith a prouder national feeling, when the embodying and discipline of a militia, and other native force, had rendered the fears of an invasion a bugbear, with which no man, scarce a woman or child, condescended to be frightened.

"My dear Sir,

"I have news to tell you. The French and Spanish fleets are in the mouth of the Channel. An express arrived this morning, a lieutenant of the Marlborough, of 64 guns, which ship was chaced by the enemy to within a few leagues of the Lizard. Sir Charles Hardy was, by the last accounts, off Ushant. I reckon it likely that he has

them between him and the land. The lieutenant says that an action must have happened; a general anxiety prevails, but less than you could have supposed. Our *friends* look a little blue. The times are big with events. I have no doubt of our beating them, unless the same devil who turmoiled the 27th of July, 1778, has still his black hand at our admiral's helm. The express counted sixty-three sail, 'tis said of the line; I hope sixty-three was the number of the whole. Should any new lights come ere the post sets out, you may be put to the expence of another ninepence. We may probably demand the swords of the S. Fencibles, in this part of the world.

" Yours, very affectionately,

" JAMES MACPHERSON.

" *Tuesday, two o'Clock, Aug.* 17, 1779."

" *Tuesday, two o'Clock, Aug.* 31.

" NOTHING new of the fleets. By the last official accounts, the C. d'Orvilliers, with fifty of the line, had advanced to where Sir Charles Hardy had been left, on the 19th. Our fleet had been driven further west. 'Twas thought Sir Charles was on another tack, and about twelve leagues off. There are thirty-two French, and eighteen Spaniards of the line, with D'Orvilliers, sixteen of the line with D. Lewis de Cordova, in sight. The fifty under D'Orvilliers are in this order:—Forty-five divided

into three squadrons; these subdivided into nine lesser squadrons, each consisting of three French and two Spaniards; five ships of the line, under the Chevalier de la Touche-Treville, destined to conduct the transports, should our fleet suffer itself to be beat or blocked up in a port. Official information says, that the embarkation at St Malo's was to have begun on Friday last, the 27th. Some reports came to-day, that 32,000 were at sea. The wind is truly an invasion wind—two points to the west of south. We think here that Hardy ought to beat 'em; others say, he will miss them and gain the Channel. I am not under great apprehensions; and John Bull keeps up his spirits wonderfully. All is calm, tranquil, and easy here. The stocks don't fall; and all the animal functions, and even pleasures, go on as usual. We shall hear some news soon. 'Tis a time of anxious suspense to speculative men."

"*September 3d*, 1779.

"This morning an express from Sir C. Hardy. He was coming up Channel—the combined fleet behind, it is said, under a press of sail, *in pursuit.* The fogs which prevailed at the mouth of the Channel during the east wind, prevented their meeting. All was involved in night. They mutually heard the signal guns, but could not see each other. We expect a decisive action. I am not of that opinion.

John Bull is perfectly indifferent. Stocks rise; yet the fate of the kingdom may depend on the turning up of the dye. One is disgusted with the white lies of the day. I believe the Bourbons are serious. Johnston's fifty gun *Romney* is thrown *out* of the line. Hardy is in great spirits—so is the whole fleet. But, if we look back, through time, we never had a sea-advantage over France, but with superiority of numbers. I hope to announce a victory in my next. The times are critical. A defeat would involve us in confusion. I don't think *that* drilling business ought to be *your* province in these times. The battle will happen, perhaps, at Spithead. Though I ought to know many things, they communicate nothing. The bell-man is at the door."

The next class of letters, from Lord Bute, I think may be considered historical, in so far as they seem to me decisively to contradict an idea very generally entertained at the time, and frequently repeated since, that there was a certain secret influence possessed by that nobleman, which regulated the choice of ministers, if not the adoption of measures; and placed between the people and the sovereign, a sort of intermediate and invisible agen-

cy, possessed of power without responsibility, which therefore, the constitutional authority of parliament could not directly controul, nor the voice of the public its applause or its censure easily reach. From the letters I am now to read, on the contrary, it appears that Lord Bute, when he did retire from official situation, retired in good earnest, and was happy to be relieved from all concern whatever with public matters. In such retirement, he felt himself, as he conceived, neglected and forgotten, much beyond the degree of neglect and oblivion which commonly follows the relinquishment of power.

The first letter, dated 20th September, 1755, may serve as an answer to the accusation brought against him by Lord Chatham, when boasting of having called forth the valour of Scotsmen and Highlanders in the service of their country. "It was not the country I objected to, but the man of that country; because he wanted wisdom, and held principles incompatible with freedom."

London, September 20, 1755.

"DEAR HUME,

"I HAVE been living a most unsettled life ever since I received your first. Real business should plead for my silence, and yet I am loath to make that excuse, because it sounds like an affected one. I know you so well, that I flatter myself you will be satisfied with assurances, that it no way proceeded

from any want of regard or real esteem. I long much to know how *Douglas* goes on. Garrick and I have never met since I saw you. I don't much like that scheme of shewing your play to Mallet; for I own I have not that great opinion of his taste; but prudential reasons with regard to Garrick may make it necessary. Since Lady Dalkeith's intended marriage has been owned, I, from being an utter stranger to Mr Townshend, have little interest with her; but I have imparted to my brother your request, who will, I am certain, do what he can.

"I once thought of sending a beautiful ode of Voltaire's on the lake of Geneva, but I see they have printed it, so that you will certainly see it; and yet I must give you here a few lines out of it:—

"Ce Loi est le premier; c'est sur ces bords heureux,
Qu' habite des humains La Deesse eternelle,
L'ame des grands Travaux, l'objet des nobles vœux,
Que tout mortel embrasse, ou desire, ou rapelle,
Qui vit dans touts les cœurs et dont le nom sacré,
Dans la Cour des Tyrans est tout bas adoré,
La Liberté, &c."

"Again, talking of the people's success in defending Geneva against the sovereign, he says,

"Leurs fronts sont Couronnez, de ces fleurs
Que la Grece, aux Champs de Marathon, prodiguoit aux vainquers.

C'est là leurs diadème, ils en font plus de compte
Que d'un cercle à fleurons de Marquis ou de Comte.
On ne voit point ici la grandeur insultante
Portant de l'épaule au coté
Un ruban que la vanité
A tissu de sa main brillante.
Ni la fortune insolente
Repoussant avec fierté
La prière humble et tremblante
De la triste pauvreté.
On n'y meprise point les travaux necessaires,
Les etats sont egaux et les hommes sont frères."

" Excellent truth, with which I will end this scrawll, desiring you to believe me,

" DEAR HOME,

" Your's, most humbly,

" BUTE."

On the subject of a Tutor to his Son.

" DEAR HOME,

" I am very much obliged to you for the friendly endeavours you have used for me, in a point of the greatest consequence. A person acting up to the character you draw of Mr Ferguson would be a treasure to me, and deserve my warmest protection. I spoke to Elliot upon the subject, and desired him to write my thoughts, as I had it not then in my power to do it myself. You would find by

him, that I want to change the plan of my children's education. You have often heard me talk of schools with horror. Before I received yours, I had been on the search of a person in whom I might repose the greatest trust I shall ever have in my power to place in any man; for it is not Greek and Latin that I am most anxious about, 'tis the formation of the heart—the instilling into the tender ductile plant, noble generous sentiments, real religion, moral virtue, enthusiasm for our country, its laws and liberties; in short, ideas fit for the situations my children, especially my eldest boy, will, in all probability, be in; the man who does this, or indeed attempts it honestly, (for who can answer for the success of the wisest education) must be my friend, and will most certainly find me extremely his. A person fit to take this great line, cannot, must not, be embarrassed with teaching the first rudiments of education. I should therefore provide some other person for that, under his eye. I have now opened my heart to you, and have given you, dear Home, more *data* to go upon. You will now be a better judge of the important commission you kindly take in hand. I expect every post to hear of *Agis*—you know I am to be feasted with the acts as they are completed.

"I am this minute come from Harrowgate, where I found Mountstuart proud of having made his first essay for the silver arrow; and not far off a victory. He enquires after his friend, as well as Frederick;

and hopes *Agis* will make him amends for the loss of *Douglas*. All are well here, and all your warm wishers. Adieu,

"DEAR HOME,

"Believe me ever

"Most sincerely yours, &c.

"BUTE.

"*Kew, August 7th*, 1757."

"DEAR HOME,

"I observe in your last letter that you make no mention of the length you are got in your play. Though I long to see you, yet it is so impossible for you to do any business here, that I own I should, (though against myself,) advise remaining in Scotland to finish it, unless you propose putting it off to another winter, which may be perhaps the most prudent measure. I have now read again and again your friend's* history, and cannot express how much it pleases me;—the opening and winding up are magnificent; the characters equal to any thing I ever read; and the style noble, animated, and pure. I protest, in my opinion, it stands the first history in the English tongue. I hope he will hear as much from others; and that, encouraged by the just reward of superior merit, he will procure new laurels

* *Dr Robertson's.*

by some other masterpiece. I hope he has got some good hand to do it justice in a French translation; for I should be grieved to hear of its appearing mutilated in a foreign dress. Adieu,

"DEAR HOME,

"Yours, most entirely,

"BUTE.

"*London, February 20th*, 1759."

"DEAR HOME,

"As I may probably continue the next winter abroad, I send this letter by George Johnson, to be delivered into your own hand. I assure you I am sorry to go without you; and yet, for the reason I mentioned in my last, you will see with me, the necessity of it; besides, if you are here next winter, I know your warm heart so well, that I am certain you will not suffer me to be calumniated and abused in my absence, without taking proper methods of answering these infamous wretches, where it is necessary or expedient; and I shall also expect to know the state of things from you, with more freedom than from others; in short, if you are here, I know I have a warm and zealous friend in this pandemonium, who will not leave me in ignorance of any thing material that comes to his knowledge. When once I know your motions and your time, I will apprize you how to direct to me, as I shall

leave my name behind me, for these vipers to spread their venom on; for, believe me, whatever advantage to my health this odious journey may be of, I know too well the turn of faction to suppose my absence is to diminish the violence I have for so many years experienced—a violence and abuse that no fear has made me too sensible to; and perhaps the more, that I may think I merit a distinguished treatment, of a very opposite nature, from a people I have served at the risk of my head. I have tried philosophy in vain, my dear Home. I cannot acquire callosity; and were it not for something still nearer to me—still more deeply interesting—I would prefer common necessaries in Bute, France, Italy, nay, Holland, to 50,000*l.* a-year, within the atmosphere of this vile place. But see it I must; so fate decrees; and I am doomed, therefore, to experience, to my last minute, all the consequences Adieu, dear Home, and depend upon it, if I live to return, you will have restored to you, in my presence, a very cordial and affectionate friend,

"BUTE.

"*London, July 27th,* 1768."

"*Venice, October 5th,* 1770.

"I have just received your letter, my worthy bard, and wish you every happiness your heart can desire in your new situation. It is, of all others,

that in which there exists no medium. Felicity or misery must attend it,—may the first be your constant lot; for I know you well enough to be certain that was your whole aim; and that you are incapable of those sordid interested views, that form the basis of modern alliance, where the heart never has any share, and even desire is often wanting; which passion, common to all animals, is, however, the only thing this age christens by the name of Love—void of tender feelings, and real delicacy. Where the half-crown does not make the match, brutal desire is alone substituted for those exquisite sensations—those raptures in which the soul and body have an equal share; and which, with me, makes the essence of that universal passion I call love; this enjoyment cannot pall, nor age or sickness weaken. May you both experience this superior bliss, to the last hour of life. I have but a poor account to give of myself. Near three months of this envenomed Sirocco has lain heavy on me; and I am grown such a stripling, or rather a withered old man, that I now appear thin in white clothes that I looked Herculean in when I was 20. I hope I may get better, if permitted to enjoy that peace, that liberty, which is the birth-right of the meanest Briton, but which has been long denied me. Adieu,

DEAR HOME,

"Yours, most affectionately,

"BUTE."

" *London, March 25th,* 1773.

" DEAR HOME,

" I DON'T wonder you are surprised at not hearing from me; it would appear to any one else most unkind, but you know me enough not to measure my friendship by my letters. Alas! my friend, Fortune has been determined to empty every envenomed arrow out of her quiver against me, which, joined to so long a state of bad health, will bring matters to a quicker issue; which, far from a painful, is rather a comfortable reflection at my time of life. Few men have ever suffered more, in the short space I have gone through of political warfare, and yet the violence of open enemies has least affected me. Think, my friend, of my son Charles being refused every thing I asked. I have not had interest to get him a company, while every alderman of a petty corporation meets with certain success. I am now in treaty, under Lord Townshend's wing, for dragoons in Ireland; if I don't succeed, I will certainly offer him to the Emperor. A thousand thanks for the boxes and snuff; before I received it, I had got a provision from Prestonpans, that will, I believe, last my life. You say nothing of moving southward, though my motions and residence are too uncertain to make me wish for it. If I am in being, and in this part of the world, I need not tell you that I shall rejoice to see you.

Adieu, my good friend.—Health, quiet, and happiness attend you many years.

"Yours, most affectionately,

"BUTE."

"*London, June 27th*, 1780.

"DEAR JOHN,

"HOW are matters going on with you in the world, while we here have both lives and property at stake? This mad Scotchman* has lighted up a flame that will not be so easily extinguished; though at present, surrounded by fifteen thousand men, it remains dormant. You will easily perceive, that under the colour of religious zeal, three different purposes were pursued by three very different sets of people; the breaking open the prisons and plundering houses, were the natural operations of the abandoned populace. Lord Mansfield's house, and many others, they have found marked for destruction, (of which both mine in town and country had the foremost rank,) belong to counsels you cannot be at a loss to guess; but the attack on the Bank, of the New River water-pipes, and the particular fire-balls made use of, came from those who really wished the total destruction of this once-great

---

* *Lord George Gordon.*

country. Fanaticism in burning Romish chapels, with a formidable list found of thirty-five thousand Roman Catholic houses, all destined to the flames, may be deemed to proceed from a fourth junto. You will see printed, by authority, lists of three or four hundred killed and wounded; but Charles tells me the first don't exceed thirty. The troops had very cautious orders, and acted accordingly: Never was an hour where spirit was so necessary to save a country at the gates of destruction; but that is fled from this island, and exists only in the first person amongst us. The extempore speech he made at Council, drew tears from several there,— '*I lament the conduct of the magistrates, but I can only answer for one—one (putting his hand on his breast,) will do his duty.*' The language of —— is, at this hour, 'Poor creatures! they did not mean mischief, a mere frolic, &c. and now all over, so that keeping the troops has very sinister purposes.' I fear, indeed, those in power think it over; but the troops once gone, I look on the fate of my house as determined; indeed, nothing but my son Charles, with forty of the Royals, saved it on the Thursday; and as to this place, I fear they may destroy it when they please. Twenty men left at Luton would have secured me, for a mob can't come from London without its being known, but eight or ten villains may do here what they please. Charles is to send me arms, but his account of the

servants left in town renders them useless, for he says, except Peter, they were all sneaking cowards. O! my friend, how does this demonstrate the folly I have been guilty of in all done here? One-fourth as much at Bute would have made that the first seat in Britain, and given me a comfortable and secure asylum in the decline of life; but repentance comes too late, and now, 'come what come may, time and the tide wear out the roughest day.'"

The last division of the correspondence, which I have selected from other letters, less interesting to the Society, consists of some from Mr Home's celebrated friend, to whom I have had occasion so often to allude, David Hume;—many of whose letters, I regret to say, our poet, with his characteristic inattention to such matters, appears to have destroyed, or rather probably neglected to keep, as his nephew, to whose kindness I am indebted for a communication of his uncle's papers and correspondence, has been able to find but a very few.

In the first part of this paper, I mentioned a *jeu d'esprit* of Mr Hume's; who, being kept out of the secret of a humorous pamphlet, written by his intimate friend, Mr Ferguson, took his revenge by writing to Dr Carlyle a letter, claiming the work as

his own; and I took occasion to observe how much this anecdote tended to confirm an observation which had frequently occurred to me, of the uncertainty of the evidence arising from letters, when the writers are dead, and the motives of the correspondence cannot be known. I have now been favoured with a copy of that letter, which I will read to the Society, who, I think, will perceive, that though plainly ironical to us, who know the previous circumstances, there is an air of sober reality about it, that would have made it appear perfectly serious to one who should have found it at some distance of time, without being possessed of such previous knowledge.

"*Edinburgh, 3d February*, 1761.

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM informed that you have received a letter from London, by which you learn that the manuscript of sister Peg has been traced to the printer's, and has been found to be, in many places, interlined and corrected in my hand-writing. I could have wished that you had not published this piece of intelligence before you told me of it. The truth is, after I had composed that trifling performance, and thought I had made it as correct as I could, I gave it to a sure hand to be transcribed; that in case any of the London printers had known my

hand, they might not be able to discover me. But as it lay by me for some weeks afterwards, I could not forbear reviewing it; and not having my amanuensis at hand, I was obliged, in several places, to correct it myself, rather than allow it to go to the press with inaccuracies of which I was sensible. I little dreamed that this small want of precaution would have betrayed me so soon; but as you know that I am very indifferent about princes or presidents, ministers of the gospel or ministers of state, kings or keysars, and set at defiance all powers, human or infernal, I had no other reason for concealing myself, but in order to try the taste of the public; whom, though I also set in some degree at defiance, I cannot sometimes forbear paying a little regard to. I find that frivolous composition has been better received than I had any reason to expect, and therefore cannot much complain of the injury you have done me by revealing my secret, and obliging me to acknowledge it more early than I intended. The only reason of my writing to you is, to know the printer's name, who has so far broke his engagements as to shew the manuscript; for the bookseller assured my friend to whom I entrusted it, that we might depend upon an absolute secrecy. I beg my compliments to Mrs Carlyle, and am,

" Dear Sir,

" Your most obedient humble servant,

" David Hume."

Copy of passage in a Letter from Mr DAVID HUME *to* Dr BLAIR, *dated Park Place, London, 28th March,* 1769.

" DEAR DOCTOR,

" *THE Fatal Discovery* succeeded, and deserved it. It has feeling, though not equal to *Douglas,* in my opinion. The versification of it is not enough finished. Our friend escaped by lying concealed; but the success of all plays in this age is very feeble; and people now heed the theatre almost as little as the pulpit. History now is the favourite reading, and our other friend,* the favourite historian. Nothing can be more successful than his last production, nor more deservedly. I agree with you; it is beyond his first performance, as was indeed natural to expect. I hope, for a certain reason which I keep to myself, that he does not intend, in his third work, to go beyond his second, though I am damnably afraid he will, for the subject is much more interesting. Neither the character of Charles V., nor the incidents of his life, are very interesting; and, were it not for the first volume, the success of this work, though perfectly well writ, would not have been so shining."

---

* Dr Robertson.

To Mr Home.

"*St Andrew's Square, September 20th*, 1775.

"Dear John,

"Of all the vices of language, the least excusable is the want of perspicuity; for, as words were instituted by men, merely for conveying their ideas to each other, the employing of words without meaning is a palpable abuse, which departs from the very original purpose and intention of language. It is also to be observed, that any ambiguity in expression is next to the having no meaning at all; and is indeed a species of it; for while the hearer or reader is perplexed between different meanings, he can assign no determinate idea to the speaker or writer; and may, on that account, say with Ovid, "*Inopem me copia fecit.*" For this reason, all eminent rhetoricians and grammarians, both ancient and modern, have insisted on perspicuity of language as an essential quality; without which, all ornaments of diction are vain and fruitless. Quinctilian carries the matter so far, as to condemn this expression, *vidi hominem librum legentem;* because, says he, *legentem* may construe as well with *librum* as *hominem;* though one would think, that the sense were here sufficient to prevent all ambiguity. In conformity to this way of thinking, Vau-

gelas, the first great grammarian of France, will not permit, that any one have recourse to the sense, in order to explain the meaning of the words; because, says he, it is the business of the words to explain the sense—not of the sense to give a determinate meaning to the words; and this practice is reversing the order of nature; like the custom of the Romans (he might have added, the Greeks) in their saturnalia, who made the slaves the masters; for you may learn from Lucian, that the Greeks practised the same frolic during the Festival of Saturn, whom they called Χρονος.

"Now, to apply, and to come to the use of this principle, I must observe to you, that your last letter, besides a continued want of distinctness in the form of the literal characters, has plainly transgressed the essential rule above-mentioned, of grammar and rhetoric. You say, that Coutts has complained to you of not hearing from me;—had you said either James or Thomas, I could have understood your meaning. About two months ago, I heard that James complained of me in this respect, and I wrote to him, though then abroad, making an apology for my being one of the subscribers of a paper which gave him some offence. I was afraid he had not received mine. The letter of Thomas, I conceived to be only a circular letter, informing me of a change in the firm of the house; and have answered it a few days ago, by giving him some directions

about disposing of my money, which proved that I intended to remain a customer to the shop. It happens, therefore, luckily, that I had obviated all objections to my conduct, on both sides.

"In turning over my papers, I find a manuscript journal of the last rebellion, which is at your service. I hope Mrs Home is better, and will be able to execute her journey. Are you to be in town soon? Yours, without ambiguity, circumlocution, or mental reservation,

"DAVID HUME."

To Mr HOME.

"*Edinburgh, 8th February,* 1776.

"DEAR TYRTÆUS,

"IT is a remark of Dr Swift's, that no man in London ever complained of his being neglected by his friends in the country. Your complaint of me is the more flattering.

"Two posts ago, I received, under a frank of General Fraser's, a pamphlet, entitled *A Letter from an Officer retired.* It is a very good pamphlet; and I conjecture you to be the author. Sallust makes it a question, whether the writer or the performer of good things has the preference? and he ascribes the greater praise to the latter. It is happy for you, that you may rest your fame on

either. I here allude to what you have done for Ferguson.

"But, pray, why do you say, that the post of Boston is like the Camp of Pirna? I fancy our troops can be withdrawn thence without any difficulty.

"I make no doubt, since you sound the trumpet for war against the Americans, that you have a plan ready for governing them, after they are subdued; but you will not subdue them, unless they break in pieces among themselves—an event very probable. It is a wonder it has not happened sooner. But no man can foretell how far these frenzies of the people may be carried. Yours,

"DAVID HUME."

Copy of a Card from Mr DAVID HUME *to* Dr BLAIR. *It was written when he, along with* Mr JOHN HOME, *was on the way down from Bath to Edinburgh.*

"*Doncaster, 27th of June.*

MR JOHN HUME, *alias* Home, *alias* the Home, *alias* the late Lord Conservator, *alias* the late Minister of the Gospel at Athelstaneford, has calculated matters so as to arrive infallibly with his friend

in St David's Street,* on Wednesday evening. He has asked several of Dr Blair's friends to dine with him there on Thursday, being the 4th of July, and begs the favour of the Doctor to make one of the number."

Subjoined to the card, there is this Note, in Dr Blair's hand writing:

"*Mem.*—This the last note received from Mr David Hume. He died on the 25th of August, 1776."

Copy of passage in a Letter from Mr David Hume *to* Dr Blair, *dated Bath, 13th May, 1776. It relates to his meeting with* Mr John Home, *when on the way to Bath, for recovery of his health.*

"You must have heard of the agreeable surprise which John Home put upon me. We travelled up to London very cheerfully together, and thence to this place, where we found Mrs Home almost quite recovered. Never was there a more friendly action, nor better placed; for what between conver-

* Mr Hume's house.

sation and gaming,* (not to mention sometimes squabbling) I did not pass a languid moment; and his company I am certain was the chief cause why my journey had so good an effect; of which, however, I suppose he has given too sanguine accounts, as is usual with him."

Excerpt from a Codicil to Mr DAVID HUME'S *Will, written in his own hand, and dated 7th August,* 1776.

"I LEAVE to my friend Mr John Home of Kilduff, ten dozen of my old claret, at his choice; and one single bottle of that other liquor called port. I also leave to him six dozen of port, provided that he attests under his hand, signed John *Hume,* that he has himself alone finished that bottle at two sittings. By this concession, he will at once terminate the only two differences that ever arose between us concerning temporal matters."

---

* Both were fond of *picquet,* and they played every evening on the road.

Note by DAVID HUME, Esq. *Nephew to the Historian.*

JOHN HOME was very strenuous in support of the *o* in preference to the *u*, in the spelling of his name, and held the point to be so clear in his own favour, as to admit of no debate. David Hume, at one time, jocularly proposed that they should determine the controversy by casting lots. "Nay," says John, "that is a most extraordinary proposal indeed, Mr Philosopher—for if you lose, you take your own name, and if I lose, I take another man's name." This he often told me with great glee, and nearly in these words.

Note by the Editor.

As to the *port-wine*, it is well known that Mr Home held it in abhorrence. In his younger days, claret was the only wine drank by gentlemen in Scotland. His epigram on the enforcement of the high duty on French wine in this country, is in most people's hands:

> "Firm and erect the Caledonian stood,
> Old was his mutton, and his claret good;
> 'Let him drink port,' an English statesman cried—
> He drank the poison, and his spirit died."

Among the papers which have been preserved, is one of a remarkable kind,—a journal of that philosopher and historian's conversation and opinions delivered during the progress of a journey, which those two friends made in company to Bath, a very short while before Mr David Hume's death. That journey was highly honourable to Mr John Home, from the cordial and disinterested attachment which it shewed him to entertain for his illustrious friend.

He was at London with his wife, when he received accounts of the dangerous situation of Mr David Hume's health, and that he proposed a journey to Bath, as one of the possible means for restoring it. Mr Home instantly set off for Scotland, with the design of attending him in that journey, and ministering to him whatever ease or comfort the society of so intimate and long-tried a friend could afford. Mr Hume felt very sensibly the kindness of this measure, and it seemed to have answered, in no inconsiderable degree, the good purpose which it was intended to serve. They travelled by easy stages, they discoursed by the road with an easy unconstrained familiarity, which a sick man, in his moments of ease, can indulge without fatigue; and, in the evening, when they came early to their resting-place for the night, they played at picquet, a game of which they were both fond enough, as well as skilful in, to find an interest-

ing amusement. When Mr Hume went to bed, naturally from his situation, at an earlier hour than his friend, Mr John Home used to put down notes of the conversation which the preceding day had afforded.

Its value, in his estimation, was such, that he got it fairly copied out, with an intention of having it published; but the historian's nephew, our excellent colleague Mr Professor Hume, whose leave he asked previously to carrying this design into execution, conceived, that at that time it would not have been proper for publication; and that in his own very significant words (addressed to Mr John Home, in answer to a letter asking his leave to make this publication), it was one which he thought his uncle, had he been alive, would have objected to. The same reasons, however, not subsisting now, he has given me leave to insert it in this place.

The Society will perceive in those unreserved effusions, the general turn and complexion of Mr Hume's historical notions. Such familiar sketches give the bent and contour of a person's mind, perhaps more truly than his elaborate compositions, as portraits drawn in a night-gown and slippers, shew the figure more freely and more naturally, than when they are finished in the costume of rank or ceremony.

The letters from Mr Hume, which are subjoined to the journal—the notes to Dr Blair, and the Codicil to Mr Hume's Will, must interest, from the peculiar situation in which they were written. The Codicil was of his own hand-writing, and dated 7th August, 1776. He died on the 25th of that month.

Copy Letter Mr ADAM FERGUSSON *to* Mr JOHN HOME, *dated at Edinburgh, the* 11*th day of April,* 1776.

"I AM much such a correspondent as usual; and for some little time have been in doubt where a letter might find you. But David shewed me a line from you to-day, by which you desire to have your letters sent to London, and after such a preamble, you may guess that my silence proceeded in part from want of matter here. The loss of one *friend,* and the danger of *another,* are not subjects that make people in haste to write. David, I am afraid, loses ground. He is chearful, and in good spirits as usual, but I confess that my hopes, from the effects of the turn of the season towards spring, have very much abated. A journey to the south, particularly to Bath, has been mentioned to him; but the thoughts of being from home, hurried at inns, and exposed to irregular meals, are very dis-

agreeable to him. Black is of opinion that he ought not to expose himself to any thing that is so; and that for his complaints, the tranquillity and usual amusement of his own fire-side, with proper diet, is his best regimen; so that I think the thoughts of any journey are at present laid aside. I hope we shall see you *here soon*, and that your attentions will contribute to preserve what we can so ill spare.

"I am, dear John,

"Most affectionately yours,

"ADAM FERGUSSON."

Note by Mr JOHN HOME.

"Soon after Mr Home received the letter from Dr Ferguson, he left London, and set out for Scotland with Mr Adam Smith. They came to Morpeth on the 23d of April, 1776, and would have passed Mr David Hume, if they had not seen his servant, Colin, standing at the gate of an inn. Mr Home thinks that his friend, Mr David Hume, is much better than he expected to find him. His spirits are astonishing: He talks of his illness, of his death, as matters of no moment, and gives an account of what passed between him and his physicians since his illness began, with his usual wit, or with more wit than usual.

"He acquainted Mr Adam Smith and me, that Dr Black had not concealed the opinion he had of the desperateness of his condition, and was rather averse to his setting out. "Have you no reason against it," said David, "but an apprehension that it may make me die sooner?—that is no reason at all." I never saw him more chearful, or in more perfect possession of all his faculties, his memory, his understanding, his wit. It is agreed that Smith shall go on to Scotland, and that I should proceed to Bath with David. We are to travel one stage before dinner, and one after dinner. Colin tells me that he thinks Mr Hume better than when he left Edinburgh. We had a fine evening as we went from Morpeth to Newcastle. David seeing a pair of pistols in the chaise, said, that as he had very little at stake, he would indulge me in my humour of fighting the highwaymen. Whilst supper was getting ready at the inn, Mr Hume and I played an hour at picquet. Mr David was very keen about his card playing."

"*Newcastle, Wednesday, 24th April.*

"Mr Hume not quite so well in the morning—says, that he had set out merely to please his friends; that he would go on to please them; that Fergusson and Andrew Stuart, (about whom we

had been talking,) were answerable for shortening his life one week a-piece; for, says he, you will allow Xenophon to be good authority; and he lays it down, that suppose a man is dying, nobody has a right to kill him. He set out in this vein, and continued all the stage in his cheerful and talking humour. It was a fine day, and we went on to Durham—from that to Darlington, where we passed the night.

"In the evening, Mr Hume thinks himself more easy and light, than he has been any time for three months. In the course of our conversation we touched upon the national affairs. He still maintains, that the national debt must be the ruin of Britain; and laments that the two most civilized nations, the English and French, should be on the decline; and the barbarians, the Goths and Vandals of Germany and Russia, should be rising in power and renown. The French king, he says, has ruined the state by recalling the parliaments. Mr Hume thinks that there is only one man in France fit to be minister, (the Archbishop of Toulouse,) of the family of Brienne. He told me some curious anecdotes with regard to this prelate; that he composed and corrected without writing; that Mr Hume had heard him repeat an elegant oration of an hour and a quarter in length, which he had never written. Mr Hume, talking with the Princess Beauvais about French policy, said that

he knew but one man in France capable of restoring its greatness; the lady said she knew one too, and wished to hear if it was the same. They accordingly named each their man, and it was this prelate."

"*Thursday, 25th.*

"LEFT Darlington about nine o'clock, and came to North Allerton. The same delightful weather. A shower fell that layed the dust, and made our journey to Borough-Bridge more pleasant. Mr Hume continues very easy, and has a tolerable appetite; tastes nothing liquid but water, and sups upon an egg. He assured me, that he never possessed his faculties more perfectly; that he never was more sensible of the beauties of any classic author than he was at present, nor loved more to read. When I am not in the room with him he reads continually. The post-boys can scarcely be persuaded to drive only five miles an hour, and their horses are of the same way of thinking! The other travellers, as they pass, look into the chaise, and laugh at our slow pace. This evening the post-boy from North Allerton, who had required a good deal of threatening to make him drive as slow as we desired, had no sooner taken his departure to go home, than he set off at full speed. '*Pour se dedommager*,' said David."

"*Friday, 26th, Borough-bridge.*

"Mr Hume this morning not quite so well. He observes, and I see it, that he has a good day and a bad one. His illness is an internal hemorrhage, which has been wasting him for a long time. He is so thin that he chooses to have a cushion under him when he sits upon an ordinary chair. He told me to-day, that if Louis XV. had died in the time of the regency, the whole French nation were determined to bring back the King of Spain to be King of France, so zealous were they for preserving the line of succession. This evening Mr Hume not quite so well, and goes to bed at a more early hour than he used to do."

"*Ferry Bridge, Sunday, 28th.*

"Mr Hume much better this morning. He told me, that the French nation had no great opinion of Cardinal Fleury; that the English had extolled him, in opposition to their own minister Sir Robert Walpole; but that Fleury was a little genius, and a cheat. Lord Marischal acquainted Mr Hume with a piece of knavery, which his lordship said nobody but a Frenchman and a priest could have been guilty of. The French ambassador at Madrid came to Lord Marischal one day,

and told him, that he had a letter from the French minister at Petersburgh, acquainting him that General Keith was not pleased with his situation in Russia, and wished to return to the Spanish service, (where he had formerly been ;) that it would be proper for Lord Marischal to apply to the court of Spain. Lord Marischal said nothing could be more agreeable to him than to have his brother in the same country with him ; but that, as he had heard nothing from himself, he could not make any application in his name. The French minister still urged him to write to the Spanish minister, but in vain. When the brothers met, several years after, they explained this matter. Keith had never any intention of coming into the Spanish service again ; and if Lord Marischal had applied to the court of Spain, measures were taken to intercept the letter, and send it to the court of Russia. General Keith, who commanded the Russian army in the field against the Swedes, would have been arrested, and sent to Siberia ; and the moment he had left the army, the Swedes were to attack the Russians. Mr Hume told me, talking of Fleury, that Monsieur Trudent, who was his eleve, acquainted him with an anecdote of that minister, and the late French king, which he, Mr Hume, believes Trudent had never ventured to tell to any body but him ; and he (David) had never told it to any body but me. Now, since Fleury, Trudent, and Lewis

are all dead, it may be told. Trudent took the liberty of observing to Fleury, that the king should be advised to apply a little more to business, and take some charge of his own affairs. Fleury, the first time Trudent spoke to him upon this subject, made him no answer; but upon his speaking again on the same subject, he told him, that he had entreated the king to be a man of business, and assured him that the French did not like an inactive prince; that in former times, there had been a race of indolent princes who did nothing at all, and were called *Les Rois Faineants;* that one of them had been put into a convent. The king made no reply; but some time afterwards, when Fleury resumed the subject, the king asked him, whether or no the prince that was put into the convent had a good pension allowed him?

"Mr Hume this day told me, that he had bought a piece of ground; and when I seemed surprised that I had never heard of it, he said it was in the New Church-yard, on the Calton Hill, for a burying-place; that he meant to have a small monument erected, not to exceed in expence one hundred pounds; that the inscription should be

DAVID HUME.

"I desired him to change the discourse. He did so; but seemed surprised at my uneasiness,

which he said was very nonsensical. I think he is gaining ground; but he laughs at me, and says it is impossible; that the year (76), sooner or later, he takes his departure. He is willing to go to Bath, or travel during the summer through England, and return to Scotland to die at home; but that Sir John Pringle, and the whole faculty, would find it very difficult to boat him, (formerly an usual phrase in Scotland for going abroad, that is, out of the island, for health.) This day we travelled by his desire three stages, and arrived with great ease at Grantham."

"*Monday, 29th.*

"FROM the treatment Mr Hume met with in France, he recurred to a subject not unfrequent with him—that is, the design to ruin him as an author, by the people that were ministers, at the first publication of his history; and called themselves Whigs, who, he said, were determined not to suffer truth to be told in Britain. Amongst many instances of this, he told me one which was new to me. The Duke of Bedford, (who afterwards conceived a great affection for Mr Hume), by the suggestions of some of his party friends, ordered his son, Lord Tavistock, not to read Mr Hume's History of England; but the young man was prevailed upon by one of his companions (Mr

Crawford of Errol) to disobey the command. He read the history, and was extremely pleased with it.

" Mr Hume told me, that the Duke de Choiseul, at the time Lord Hertford was in France, expressed the greatest inclination for peace, and a good correspondence between France and Britain. He assured Lord Hertford, that if the court of Britain would relinquish Falkland island, he would undertake to procure from the court of Spain the payment of the Manilla ransom. Lord Hertford communicated the proposal to Mr Grenville, who slighted it. Lord Hertford told Mr Hume the same day an extraordinary instance of the violence of faction. Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, when the Whig ministers were turned out of all their places at home, and the Duke of Marlborough still continued in the command of the army abroad, the discarded ministers met, and wrote a letter, which was signed by Lord Somers, Lord Townshend, Lord Sunderland, and Sir Robert Walpole, desiring the Duke to bring over the troops he could depend on, and that they would seize the Queen's person, and proclaim the Elector of Hanover Regent. The Duke of Marlborough answered the letter, and said it was madness to think of such a thing. Mr Horace Walpole, Sir R. Walpole's youngest son, confirmed the truth of this anecdote, which he had heard his father repeat often and often; and Mr

Walpole allowed Mr Hume to quote him as his authority, and make what use he pleased of it. When George I. came to England, he hesitated whether to make a Whig or a Tory administration, but the German minister, Bernstorf, determined him to take the side of the Whigs, who had made a purse of thirty thousand guineas, and given it to this German. George I. was of a moderate and gentle temper.—He regretted all his life, that he had given way to the violence of the Whigs in the beginning of his reign. Whenever any difficulty occurred in Parliament, he used to blame the impeachment of the Tories,—" Ce diable de impeachment," as he called it.

" The Whigs, in the end of Queen Anne's reign, bribed the Emperor's ministers, not to consent to the peace, and to send over Prince Eugene with proposals to continue the war.

" This anecdote from Lord Bath. Another anecdote Mr Hume mentioned, but distrusted the authority, for it was David Mallet who told Mr Hume, that he had evidence in his custody of a design to assassinate Lord Oxford.

" Prior, after the accession, was reduced to such poverty by the persecution he met with, that he was obliged to publish his works by subscription. Lord Bathurst told Mr Hume, that he was with Prior reading the pieces that were to be published,

and he thought there was not enough to make two small volumes. He asked Prior if he had no more poems? He said, No more that he thought good enough.—'What is that?' said Bathurst, pointing to a roll of paper, 'A trifle,' said Prior, 'that I wrote in three weeks, not worthy of your attention or that of the public.' Lord Bathurst desired to see it. This neglected piece was *Alma*."

"*Tuesday, 30th.*

"LAST night, when Mr Hume was going to bed, he complained of cold. One part of his malady had been a continual heat, so that he could not endure a soft or warm bed, and lay in the night with a single sheet upon him; he desired to have an additional covering. Colin observed to him, that he thought it a good symptom. Mr Hume said he thought so too, for it was a good thing to be like other people. This morning he is wonderfully well, which is visible in his countenance and colour, and even the firmness of his step. Talking of the state of the nation, which he continually laments, he mentioned an anecdote of the former war. He was at Turin with General Sinclair, after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and, considering the superiority which the French arms had gained, he could not conceive why France granted such good terms to Britain. He desired General Sinclair to

touch upon that subject with the King of Sardinia That Prince, who was very familiar with the General, said he was at a loss to give any account of that matter; but, many years after, when Mr Hume was minister in France, and lived in great intimacy with Monsieur Puysieux, Secretary of State, who had negociated the peace of Aix, Mr Hume asked him the reason of the conduct of France at that time? Puysieux told him, that it was the king's aversion to war; that he knew more of it than any man alive, for, the year before the peace, he was ordered by the king to propose pretty near the same terms. He remonstrated against making the offer; said that at least the proposal should come from England; and that there was always some advantage to be gained by receiving, rather than propounding terms. The king was impatient, and obliged Puysieux to write the letter, (which General Ligonier carried,) with those terms which next year were agreed to by the British court. Mr John Home said he knew that the King of France promoted the peace of Paris from the aversion he had to war; and the peace was made at a time when it seemed impossible for Britain to carry on a war of such extent, and retain her scattered conquests. Mr Hume mentioned another singular anecdote concerning the beginning of the last war. When a squadron of the English fleet

attacked and took two French men of war, the Alcide and the Lys, Louis XV. was so averse to war, that he would have pocketed the insult; and Madame Pompadour said it was better to put up with the affront, than to go to war without any object but the point of honour. It is known, that neither the king, nor the ministers of England, wished for war. The French King abhorred the thought of war!—What then was the cause? Chiefly the fear of the popular clamour, and of the opposition in the Duke of Newcastle's mind. Mr Hume thinks Lord North no great minister, but does not see a better; cannot give any reason for the incapacity and want of genius, civil and military, which marks this period. He looks upon the country as on the verge of decline. His fears seem rather too great, and things are not quite so bad as he apprehends; but certainly the first show of statesmen, generals, and admirals, is, without comparison, the worst that has been seen in this country. I said to Mr Hume, that I thought the great consideration to be acquired by speaking in Parliament, was the cause of that want of every other quality in men of rank; they do speak readily, but there are many orators who can neither judge nor act well."

"*Wednesday, 31st April.*

"ARRIVED in London, where we saw Sir John Pringle, who thought Mr Hume much better than he expected to see him, and in no immediate danger. We staid a few days in London, and then set out for Bath.

"In travelling from London to Bath, we had occasion frequently to make our observations on the passengers whom we met, and on those who passed us, as every carriage continued to do. Nothing occurred worthy the writing down, except Mr David's plan of managing his kingdom, in case Ferguson and I had been princes of the adjacent states. He knew very well, he said, (having often disputed the point with us,) the great opinion we had of military virtues as essential to every state; that from these sentiments rooted in us, he was certain he would be attacked and interrupted in his projects of cultivating, improving, and civilizing mankind by the arts of peace; that he comforted himself with reflecting, that from our want of economy and order in our affairs, we should be continually in want of money; whilst he would have his finances in excellent condition, his magazines well filled, and naval stores in abundance; but that his final stroke of policy, upon which he depended, was to give one of us a large subsidy to fall upon the other, which would infallibly secure

to him peace and quiet, and after a long war, would probably terminate in his being master of all the three kingdoms. At this sally, so like David's manner of playing with his friends, I fell into a fit of laughing, in which David joined; and the people that passed us certainly thought we were very merry travellers."

HAVING communicated this biographical essay to my friend, *Sir Robert Liston*, lately our ambassador at the Porte, who was the early intimate and neighbour of *Dr Wilkie*, he wished me to correct the expression, uttered in the course of free and unweighed conversation, by *Mr Charles Townshend*, containing the opinion of that gentleman with regard to Dr Wilkie, which will be found at p. 15. I give Sir Robert's correction in his own words, contained in the following note to me:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"YOU have afforded me* a delicious treat by the communication of your *Account of the Life of*

---

* I am happy to have this opportunity of setting down here the name of my excellent class-fellow and earliest friend, *Sir Robert Liston*. It is needless for me to eulogize that name;

John Home, whom I know well, and to whom I think you have done perfect justice.

"I am anxious that you should mollify, or modify, what you say with respect to *Professor Wilkie*.

"You have spoken fairly of his genius, which I, like others, felt to be original and luminous beyond that of any man I have ever seen.

"But I knew him long, and knew him intimately, and I can assure you that Wilkie was good-humoured, mild, attached to his family and his friends, full of condescension and kindness in his notice to young persons,—of which I have a most grateful remembrance. He talked indeed a great deal, and loved disquisition and debate; but there was nothing overbearing or offensive, or even stiff, in the manner of his urging his arguments; on the contrary, he was always calm, placid, perfectly master of his temper,—and often lively, jocular, and full of merriment.

"If he deserved, therefore, the epithet *rough and unpolished*, it was not because he was at any moment rude or harsh in the intercourse of life, but because he abstained from every thing like flattery

---

it has been praised at courts and by princes; but I know that he will not the less value the suffrage of an ancient friend, felt, deeply felt, though not expressed, in the private room in which I write.

H. M.

or compliment, and perhaps too frankly spoke the truth; and if he was not *accommodating to the decorum of society*, it was solely in the slovenliness of his dress; and the neglect of cleanliness in his habits, sometimes, I own, carried to a degree that caused disgust in persons of delicacy and high breeding.

"Be assured of the perfect regard and attachment of your most faithful humble servant,

"ROBERT LISTON."

END OF THE LIFE OF MR JOHN HOME.

DRAMATIC WORKS.

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE,

PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

In dedications, especially those which poets write, mankind expect to find little sentiment, and less truth. A grateful imagination adorns its benefactor with every virtue, and even flatters with sincerity. Hence the portrait of each patron of the Muses is drawn with the same outline, and finished as a model of perfection. Instructed by the errors of others, I presume not to make the panegyric of the Prince of Wales, nor to extol the patronage of literature as the most shining quality of a prince. Your Royal Highness will permit me to mention one sort of patronage which can never be praised too much; that, I mean, which, extending its in-

fluence to the whole society, forms and excites the genius of individuals, by exalting the spirit of the state.

Institutions, that revive, in a great and highly civilized people, those virtues of courage, manhood, and love of their country, which are most apt, in the progress of refinement, to decay, produce at the same time that pleasing and ornamental genius, which cannot subsist in a mind that does not partake of those qualities which it describes. This is an observation which has escaped the notice of the greater part of writers, who have inquired into the causes of the growth and decay of poetry and eloquence; but it has not escaped the penetration of Longinus, who, writing in the decline of the Roman Empire, and lamenting that the true sublime was not to be found in the works of his time, boldly imputes that defect to the change of policy; and enumerates, with indignation, the vices of avarice, effeminacy, and pusillanimity, which, arising from the loss of liberty, had so enthralled and debased the minds of men, that they could not look up, as he calls it, to any thing elevated and sublime: And here, as in other questions, the great critic quotes the authority of his master Homer.—"The

day of slavery bereaves a man of half his virtue." The experience of succeeding times has shewn that genius is affected by changes less violent than the loss of liberty; that it ever flourishes in times of vigour and enterprize, and languishes amidst the sure corruption of an inactive age.

Your Royal Highness, as heir-apparent of the British empire, hath in view the noblest field that ever a laudable ambition entered. The envied state of this nation cannot remain precisely as it is; the tide must flow, or ebb faster than it has ever flowed. A Prince destined in such a period to reign, begins a memorable æra of perfection or degeneracy. The serious cares and princely studies of your youth, the visible tenor of your generous and constant mind, have filled the breasts of all good men with hopes of you, equal to their wishes. That these hopes may be fulfilled in their utmost extent, is the sincere and ardent prayer of

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble, most obedient,

And most devoted Servant,

JOHN HOME.

AGIS;

A

TRAGEDY.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY ————.

SPOKEN BY MR GARRICK.

If, in these days of luxury and ease,
A tale from Sparta's rigid state can please;
If patriot plans a British breast can warm;
If kings asserting liberty can charm;
If virtue still a grateful aspect wear;
Check not at Agis' fall the gen'rous tear.
He view'd his subjects with a parent's love;
With zeal to save a sinking people strove;
Strove their changed hearts with glory to inflame;
To mend their morals, and restore their name;
Till faction rose with murder at her side;
Then mourn'd his country, persevered, and died.
That country once for virtue was revered;
Admired by Greece; by haughty Asia fear'd.
Then citizens and soldiers were the same;
And soldiers heroes; for their wealth was fame.
Then for the brave the fair reserved her charms,
And scorn'd to clasp a coward in her arms.
The trumpet call'd; she seized the sword and shield;
Array'd in haste her husband for the field;
And sighing, whisper'd in a fond embrace,
"Remember!—death is better than disgrace."

The widow'd mother shew'd her parting son
The race of glory which his sire had run.
" My son, thy flight alone I shall deplore.
Return victorious !—or return no more !"
While beauty thus with patriot zeal combined,
And round the laurel'd head her myrtle twined ;
Whilst all confest the virtuous were the great ;
Fame, Valour, Conquest, graced the Spartan state.
Her pow'r congenial with her virtue grew,
And Freedom's banner o'er her phalanx flew ;
But soon as Virtue dropt her sick'ning head,
Fame, Valour, Conquest, Power and Freedom fled.
May this sad scene improve each Briton's heart !
Rouse him with warmth to act a Briton's part !
Prompt him with Sparta's noblest sons to vie ;
To live in glory ; and in freedom die !

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGIS, *King of Sparta.*
LYSANDER, AMPHARES, } *Spartans.*
RHESUS, EUXUS, } *Thracians.*

AGESISTRATA, *Mother of* AGIS.
SANDANE, *Queen to* LEONIDAS, *the exiled King.*
EUANTHE, *an Athenian Lady.*

Senators, Ephori, Messengers.

AGIS.

ACT I.

SCENE,—*A Court and Hall, common to the Palaces of the Kings of Sparta.*

Enter SANDANE, *attended.*

San. Hasten, Orontes, to the Senate-house,
And learn if rumour's voice has spoke the truth.
[*Exit Attendant.*
The adverse fortune of an exiled king
Pursues my lord. Achaia's generous aid
Sustains his cause in vain. Why risk a battle,
When the continuance of defensive war
Secured success and victory in Sparta?
Would I had never left thy splendid court,
Delightful Sardis! to be Sparta's queen.

Enter AMPHARES.

Welcome, Amphares! Have the armies met?

Amph. They have. This morning, at the break of day,
The Spartan army charged Achaia's host;
This and no more is known. Suspense and fear
Possess the people; to the gates they run,
Then to their houses: The still whisper spreads
Through justling multitudes the dread alarm.

San. Alas! revenge and empire now depend
On the wild issue of unruly war.
What if the arms of Agis should prevail?

Amph. Although he should, the toils of fate surround him.
Dauntless and firm our brave associates stand,
And with impatience wait the destined hour
To rush on Agis. This unlook'd-for battle
Is but a solemn prelude to the act,
Which bold conspiracy will soon perform.
This day shall terminate the reign of Agis,
And make, O Queen! all power in Sparta thine.

San. I see that danger only whets the brave.
But yet, Amphares, if my lord is vanquish'd,
Will not the conquering army awe the city?

Amph. Agis shall be the surety of our cause,
And hostage for our safety, till we wrest
The sword from proud Lysander, if he conquers;
But that I fear not much. New to command,
From idle Athens the mock hero comes,
Starts up a soldier, and a statesman too;
Each palm he claims: All honours must adorn
The chosen friend of visionary Agis.

San. May Mars direct him so to guide the war,
As Agis rules the state: And mutiny
Prove there as fatal as sedition here!

Amph. This factious state must change its feeble form,
Waver no more beneath a double reign
Of limited, contending, useless kings.
Henceforth one monarch shall in Sparta rule,
As Jove alone in high Olympus reigns.

San. So reign the mighty monarchs of the East;
And such imperial power, I thought, belong'd
To Sparta's king, else I had ne'er been queen.
Young, and deceived, I left my father's court
For Lacedæmon's miserable sceptre.
I did endeavour to extend its sway,
And to ambition roused my Spartan lord.
But the vain pupil of the Grecian schools,

Unprincely Agis, marr'd the brave design.
Chief of the multitude, idol and slave
Of the base populace, he led the herd,
He urged their brutal fury on the king.
Amph. And now their fury on himself recoils.
Like the unruly elephant, they turn,
And trample down the ranks in which they fought.
San. That is their liberty.
Amph. Let us employ,
And then suppress, such formidable licence.
My magistracy now is near expired;
A king's resentment and a rival's hate
Have long hung over my devoted head:
Farewell to place, to dignity, and power,
Whilst haughty Agis fills the Spartan throne.
I will not live obscure in Lacedæmon,
Nor roam through Grecian states a banish'd man.
If I must set, to rise and shine no more,
A fiery track shall mark my setting sun.—
But Agis comes.
San. And Agesistrata.
Farewell! Success attend thee, brave Amphares!
I will not stay. My soul disdains to hide
Its hatred or its scorn. [*Exit* SANDANE.

Amph. Yet they who mean
To gratify these passions must conceal them.
This day decides my fate. So let it be,
Such brief conclusion have I ever loved.—
Assist me, Hermes, god of stratagems,
With artful words, to sooth the mind of Agis,
And turn him from the track my purpose holds!

Enter AGIS *and* AGESISTRATA.

Ages. Alas! my son! that bold bad man I dread!
Agis. He seems to wait us.—At this hour, Amphares,
I think that thou of all men shouldst have shunn'd me.
Amph. My motive in attending here your presence
Merits a less injurious salutation.
Agis. I know thy merits, and I will reward them.—
Art thou not author of the woes of Sparta,
Prime mover and inflamer of sedition?
Hast thou not bent the power of thy high office
To the subversion of the state thou servest?
At thee this day my indignation burns
I am dishonour'd——

Amph. What has dishonour'd thee?

Agis. Thou and thy practices: They have compell'd me
To leave the noblest station of a prince.
In time of war where should a king be found
But at his army's head? There Agis stood,
When you and your presumptuous Ephori
Required my presence here. Ungrateful Spartans!
Had you allow'd me but one other day,
Then had I fought this battle for my country,
And died or conquer'd with her bravest sons.

Ages. Peril, my son! dwells not in camps alone:
In cities, palaces, and courts of justice,
With treachery and treason she inhabits.
Peril attended thus thou must encounter,
More hideous sure than in the ranks of war.

Amph. I know my actions have incensed the king;
But I imagined not that such suspicions
Found entertainment in your royal breast.

Agis. Hast thou not join'd the enemies of Agis?
Thou who wast once his friend, inconstant man!

Amph. I have opposed the counsel of a foe,
Whose arts deprived me of my prince's favour.

Agis. Thou hast opposed Lycurgus and the laws,
Which raised the name of Sparta to the skies.
The Delphic God inspired the deep design:
For more than human was that power of thought
Which join'd the public to the private good,
With such perfection, that each selfish passion
Flow'd in the channel of the common welfare,
And, like one family of sons and sires,
And dearest brothers, a great people lived:
In peace they lived, without or strife or scorn;
In war they fought to conquer, or to die.
Equal and free, our happy fathers knew
No interest but the interest of the state;
No gain but Sparta's glory; proud they bore
That palm aloft, and shared the high respect,
The admiration, which consenting Greece
Paid to th' imperial virtue of their country.

Amph. Revolving time that system overthrew,
And changed the manners and the laws of Sparta.

Agis. The laws have been neglected, not annull'd,
And corrupt rulers have corrupted manners.
Authority will soon revive the laws,
And great example yet restore the manners,
In spite of those who have oppress'd their country,

Deprived the people of their ancient rights,
And, while the nation sunk beneath their sway,
Still strove for power in a declining kingdom,
Still sought for wealth in an impoverish'd land.
Even at this hour rapacious they persist,
And, like some wretches in a stranded vessel,
Plunder and riot in the midst of ruin.

Amph. Moved by the present perils of the state,
This signal hour I chose, unknown as yet
The fortune of the field, to change my conduct,
And make an offer of my aid to Agis.

Agis. If I should judge the future by the past,
Thou must forgive me, though I doubt thy faith.

Ages. Yet hear him, Agis: in an hour like this,
He who assistance offers is a friend.

Agis. This hour may yet deceive their country's foes.
I know the base foundation of that hope
Which makes my baffled enemies presume.
Lysander's army in its ranks contains
The best and bravest of Laconia's sons;
The faction wish and hope defeat to them,
That Sparta's generous youth may ne'er return
To guard that freedom which has made them brave.

Amph. The boldness of their hopes their deeds will prove
In the assembly, if Achaia conquer.
Ages. Amphares, say, what is their utmost aim?
Amph. The old dependants of the exiled king,
And all the venal members of the state,
Won by Sandane's arts and foreign gold,
Aim to restore Leonidas, who comes
With hostile armies to enslave his country:
Therefore Sandane's proffers I rejected,
Have warn'd the king, and would have served him too:
But since resentment and distrust prevent me,
Neutral I stand, and will not seek that welcome
Which his more artful enemies would give.
Agis. Thou speak'st more boldly than becomes Amphares.
Add that to the offences I forgive.
It is the sacred maxim of my reign,
That in a prince's consecrated breast
Revenge and anger should not long remain.
These passions in a king afflict the state,
By driving rash offenders to despair.
This day decides your character with me.
Now let your actions prove your words sincere.

Amph. No other terms I ask, and sure I am
Ne'er shall Amphares need again forgiveness.
[*Exit* AMPHARES.

Manent AGIS *and* AGESISTRATA.

Agis. Well has he judged the season of submission.
He will assist us if Lysander conquers.

Ages. May Jove avert the evils which I fear!
I dread the ruin of the Spartan state,
And fear the downfal of our ancient house.
The blackest fury of the Stygian realm,
The most destructive, is infernal discord.
Bathed in the blood of kings she walks this world,
And tumbles states and empires to the ground.

Agis. Nations oft perish by their princes' crime;
But now if Sparta's ancient state must fall,
Gods and good men shall witness for its king,
That he with fate contended for his people,
And on the ruins of their virtue fell.

Ages. Think not I mean to blame your high design.
Age has not changed the tenor of my mind,
Nor pall'd my admiration of true glory.
Sprung, like thy father, from Alcides' blood,

I feel the spirit of the Spartan line.
Only let me adjure thee to beware,
And walk with caution through surrounding perils.
Though thou despisest every form of danger,
Think what a helpless train attends on thee!
An aged mother, and an infant son.

Agis. Divine Alcides will protect his race.

Ages. I will invoke the God; in times like these
Prayers are the arms of our defenceless sex.
A spotless choir of matrons and of virgins,
Who o'er their country mourn, myself will lead
To the high temple of the son of Jove.
He yet may hear the voice of supplication,
And stretch his arm to save the Spartan state.

[*Exit* AGESISTRATA.

AGIS *alone.*

Agis. Without, the enemy; within, the faction.
What should I think? I have a thousand thoughts,
That rise and fall like waves upon the shore.
I need thee now, Lysander! O my friend!
I lean on thee, and thou perhaps art fall'n.—
Ye ever-living gods, who know my heart,
I trust in you, for righteous are my thoughts,

All bent on raising up long-prostrate Sparta.
With Sparta too, I would be proud to rise,
And gain such glory as my fathers gain'd,
When Persia's tyrant trembled at their arms.
If in this just ambition I should perish,
My name shall go to nations yet unborn.
But I must change my strain: Euanthe comes.
Alas! Lysander, led by love and thee,
She left her Athens for this land of broils.

Enter EUANTHE.

Euan. No tidings from the camp?

Agis. None, fair Euanthe.
If we had lost the field, the flying rout
Ere this had reach'd our gates.

Euan. Oh! many a dame,
Matron and virgin, tremble at this hour;
But who has cause like mine? The most forlorn
And desolate of women is Euanthe!
If——

Agis. Small the chance of what Euanthe fears;
In the long wars of still-contending Greece
Leaders of armies have but rarely fallen.

Euan One thing I know, and with prophetic tongue

I speak it, Prince! if Sparta triumph not,
Ne'er shall your eyes again behold Lysander.
Disdain in him is fatal as despair.

Agis. When he returns victorious from the field,
Then shall he hear who best has spoke his praise.
But I must leave you now: The senate waits me.
Hereafter we shall speak of this, and smile;
Like mariners who on the peaceful shore
Sit, and with pleasure talk of tempests past.

[*Exit* AGIS.

EUANTHE *alone.*

This stedfast ease is all assumed, I see;
He staggers at the imminent event.
How dreadful is this interval to me,
Who am bereft and destitute of all
Those aids that stay affliction; and must bear
The weight of woe that's heavier every hour.
The queen, the generous Agis too, discharge
The dues of kindred with unfeigned love.
But our acquaintance is not old enough
To yield a ripen'd sympathy, whose taste
Alone can comfort such a mind as mine.
Yet I repent me not, in this extreme,

That I forsook my country and my friends.
They would have forced me to a loathed bed,
And torn me from the noblest of mankind.
If he should fall! my love! my only love!
Shall I survive thee; and return to Athens,
Be humbled there before my haughty kindred,
And hear them blame the ashes of Lysander?
Forbid it, fearless love! forbid it, shame!
Forbid it, honour, and my nature's pride!
Death shall forbid it, for I dare to die.

Enter RHESUS.

Euan. Rhesus, great Gods! Oh say, how fares Lysander?

Rhe. As well as glorious victory can make him.

Euan. Forgive my rash despair, my thanks accept,
Ye gracious powers who guard his daring breast!
Where is he now?

Rhe. With Agis in the senate.

Euan. Already here? Blest be the Gods of Greece!

Rhe. Soon as the trumpet from pursuit recall'd
Our conquering Spartans, in the field arrived

A weary messenger, by Agis sent;
Lysander straight bespoke the royal band:
" With all the speed of men to Sparta haste,
Chastise bold treason, and defend your king."
He said; and call'd to me. With a few horse
I follow'd him: And when he sought the king,
By his command to you I brought these tidings.

Euan. Most welcome, Rhesus. But has Sparta lost
None of her noble youth?

Rhe. No man of note
Fell in the field but one, whose loss you'll mourn,
Lysander's friend, Athenian Polydorus.

Euan. Alas! alas! my joy is mix'd with woe
Unhappy youth! on my ill-omen'd head
The blame of thy untimely death will fall.
Conducting me, thou camest to distant Sparta.
Fatal the honours Sparta's king bestow'd
Upon the generous guardian of Euanthe.

Rhe. Lady, the people of my native land,
The warlike Thracians, hold it vain to mourn
For men who fall in battle; such they deem
The favourites of Mars, our country's God.
Those they bewail who die by dire disease,

Of youth and vigour full. But most of all
Lament old men, who drink the bitter dregs
Of life and woe, and in decrepit age
(Extremity of dotage) wish to live.

Euan. Who are these men who near the temple stand?
Uncouth to me their garb, and strange their arms.

Rhe. They are Thracians, lady.

Euan. What seek they here?

Rhe. I will accost the herald,
And learn his business.

Euan. To the palace, Rhesus,
I go the willing messenger of joy.
This victory will free the anxious queen
From many fears. I pray thee do not tarry,
But come and tell me what yon herald bears,
And what affairs still occupy the senate.

Rhe. Depend on the unwearied zeal of Rhesus.

[*Exit* RHESUS.

Manet EUANTHE.

Agis and Sparta, and the public cares,
Detain Lysander from my longing eyes.
I see the happy change of my condition,

And share the triumphs of the man I love;
But yet, the slightest circumstance creates
New fears to me. Why lingers thus Lysander!
My mind is not at rest; the winds are hush'd,
But still my bosom quivers from the storm.

[*Exit* EUANTHE.

ACT II.

SCENE,—A Court, &c. as before.

Euan. Their tedious council now is at an end,
And surely he will hasten to Euanthe.
What means this clamour?
[*Shout of the People behind the Scenes.*
Ha! he comes, he comes!
Loud acclamations and the voice of joy
Proclaim the hero.

Enter LYSANDER.

Lysan. O my life! my love!
To meet thee here is happiness complete.
The Gods have blest me to my utmost wish,
And brought me full of glory to Euanthe.
Euan. Thanks to the Gods who have preserved Lysander!
Athenian Pallas sure has heard my prayers.

Lysan. And mine; for mutual is the lovers' prayer.
Another deity I now invoke,
Whose rites the God of war has long delay'd.
With peace well pleased shall golden Hymen come,
And crown at last our long eventful love.

Euan. Speak not of Hymen now: his torch for me
He shall not light, whilst cruel Discord waves
Her horrid brand, and whilst unburied lies
Thy friend and mine, the generous Polydorus.

Lysan. Though love and glory both my breast inspire,
And fortune smiles on both, yet sorrow finds
A place to sit in: but 'tis temper'd sorrow;
For never Grecian hero greater died.

Euan. He fell the victim of his love to thee;
He follow'd thee when thou forsook'st Euanthe,
Left me that day I touch'd the Spartan shore,
Though royal Agis begg'd thee to remain.

Lysan. Unjust Euanthe, thus to blame Lysander
Who sought the field, the soldier of his love
As of his sacred country: fought to gain,
With liberty, a rank and place of honour,

Such as becomes the husband of Euanthe;
That tender name, and names that wait upon it,
Awake emotions as implacable
To tyranny, as generous and great,
As ever self-renouncing hero own'd.
When the chief aim is right, all passions else
Of noble kind impel the self-same way.
The lover and the husband rouse and fire
The Spartan and the man.
Of common clay, and in one common mould
Mankind are made; but the celestial fire
That gives them life and soul, is liberty.
And I, Prometheus-like, to gain that fire
For Sparta's sons, would brave the bolt of Jove.

Euan. To me you need not vaunt your daring mind.
Alas, Lysander! I am still afraid
Of perils lurking in this troubled state.
O leave me not again to grief and fear,
And to Amphares!

Lysan. Leave thee to Amphares!

Euan. Yes, in thy absence he did talk of love,
Boasted his wealth, his clients, and his power;
Mention'd the ruin of thy father's fortunes,
And spoke contemptuous of thy rash designs.

Lysan. Immortal Gods! Did I not hate this man
Enough?

Enter a Helot.

Whence, Helot?

Hel. Lord, from Celimene. [*Delivers a Letter.*

Lysan. [Reads.] "*Let Agis stand upon his guard to-day,*
This to Lysander from a faithful friend."—
Helot, return, and tell the noble dame,
That the remembrance of her generous mind
Shall live for ever in my grateful breast.

Euan. Who is this faithful friend?

Lysan. A Spartan dame,
A gentle one, though wedded to a foe
Of royal Agis. In her virgin state
She was the constant and the loved companion
Of fair Deidamia, Agis' short-lived queen.
Through all our various strife, the generous dame
Preserves the friendships of her early days.
This scroll the king must see. Farewell, Euanthe.

Euan. Its threatning strain awakes my former fears.
Would you had been, like me, content with love,
And never left Illyssus' flowery banks!

A fairer garland there you might have won,
Than ever war bestow'd, the immortal wreath
Of Pallas, queen of arts as well as arms.
But you forsook the vale, and left the shade,
To climb ambition's bare and rocky height,
To stand the storms and tempests of the world.

Lysan. Your words, like melancholy music, take
My list'ning ear, and cause delusive sadness;
For vain the malice of our baffled foes,
And impotent will prove their last endeavours;
Past are the storms and tempests of our fortune;
Let not Euanthe heed the rack of clouds,
Nor dread the murmurs of the falling main.

Euan. Elate with victory, you scorn your foes.
I wish that Rhesus would return again
Before you go to Agis.

Lysan. Where is Rhesus?

Euan. I saw some warriors clad in horrid arms
Near yonder temple stand. Strait Rhesus knew
The garb and arms of his own native Thrace,
And, wond'ring at the sight, went forth to learn
Who and from whence they were.

Lysan. That shall be known.
In yonder temple sit the Ephori,
Those factious magistrates who love not Agis.

If Rhesus come to you, detain him not;
Our resolutions may on him depend.

Euan. Lysander, stay; you go again to Agis,
Perhaps to plan new perils to thy life;
If so, by all that's sacred I conjure thee
To let me know your purpose. Speak with me
Before you execute what you resolve.
The image of the stern Amphares haunts me;
Need I entreat thee to defend me from him?

Lysan. No! by the Gods! O urge me not,
Euanthe!
Nor rouse those thoughts a lover cannot bear.
Defend thee from Amphares! O my fair!
When thou art wrong'd, Lysander lives no more!
But see, the king.

Euan. Let caution shew your love.

[LYSANDER *goes off towards that side of the stage where* AGIS *appears.*

Manet EUANTHE.

If nature teaches me aright to read
The mind of man, this is a powerful spell
To charm the daring spirit of Lysander,
And make him think of me as well as Sparta.

[*Exit* EUANTHE.

Enter AGIS.

Lysan. Regard, O king, the warnings of a friend
Instructed in the counsels of thy foes.
Behold the stedfast faith of Celimene.
[*Gives the Letter.*

Agis. I cannot think so basely of the people.
For them I have unplumed the regal power,
And deck'd their freedom with the spoils of kings.
If they betray me; of all creatures, man
Is most ungrateful to his benefactor.
The generous courser and the faithful dog
With true affection love their gentle master;
Nay, even the heavy ox, the stubborn mule,
Dullest of beasts, they know the hand that feeds them.

Lysan. Humanity lives in thy breast, O king!
And dictates confidence unlimited;
Virtue approves the generous extreme,
And magnanimity this error loves.
Let private men indulge the glorious fault,
And set their lives and fortunes on the faith
And gratitude of those they have obliged;

But let severer prudence guard the heart
Of him whose brows are circled with a crown.

Enter an Officer.

Off. O king! the captain of Amycla's gate
Informs you that he has this hour descried
A band of men who halted near his post;
A thousand Thracians, they report themselves,
Hired by Amphares for Seleucus' service.

Agis. A thousand Thracians!

Off. On their march to Sardis.

Lysan. By whose permission do they march this way?

Off. Before the troops arrived, a herald came,
Who to the Ephori a message bore.

Agis. Your diligence in duty I commend.
[*Exit Officer.*

Lysan. The veil's withdrawn, and treason stands reveal'd.
" Ne'er shall Amphares need again forgiveness."
With what a double tongue the traitor spoke!
All-seeing Gods! how little do we know
The greatness of those blessings you confer.
Had we not fought to-day, had we not conquer'd,
Agis and Sparta had been lost for ever.

Agis. This victory came like the bolt of Jove,
And levell'd their designs.

Lysan. Yet, if they dare
The worst of crimes, their treason may succeed.
Your troops, your conquering troops, are not arrived;
The assembly meets; unguarded there you stand;
What keeps the traitors from your noble life?

Agis. My life, Lysander! No, I fear not that.
The ancient annals of this land record,
That barbarous foes revere the race divine,
And turn in battle from a Spartan king.

Lysan. The multitude may still revere their lord,
Who from the blood of great Alcides springs;
And yet, some impious hand may strike the prince,
Although of virtue as of race divine.

Agis. I'll change the guards, and place at every gate
Some men of trust.

Lysan. Mount your Thessalian steed,
And meet the troops that hasten to your aid.
With eager steps the royal band advance,
And wish for nothing but their king to lead them.
Then if the furies in their wrath provoke

Your foes to rise in arms, let arms decide.
Ne'er were the good and bad winnow'd so well,
And sever'd from each other. Such the hosts,
And such will be their fate, as when the rage
Of earth-born giants dared the sons of heaven.

Agis. Thou reason'st like an anxious friend, Lysander.
Thy fears are all for me, mine for my people.

Enter RHESUS.

Hail, gallant Rhesus! know'st thou aught of those
Thy countrymen, who thus unlook'd-for come,
And in a doubtful hour perplex our councils?

Rhe. The Thracians are a thousand men complete.
From snowy Hemus and the northern hills
Of wild Odrysus the fierce warriors come.
Rhinalces leads them, of illustrious birth;
But stern, imperious, and grown old in arms,
He knows no umpire but the sword, no law
Except obedience to the prince he serves.

Agis. Such oft are those that quit a needy home
To serve as hirelings in a tyrant's host.

Rhe. Next in command, my brother Euxus stands,

A youth to Mars devoted; for he loves
Danger itself, not danger's rich reward.

Lysan. Hast thou yet seen him?

Rhe. No.

Lysan. Has he yet heard
That thou art here in Sparta?

Rhe. He believes
That I am still in Athens. From the herald
I kept my name and quality conceal'd;
For I suspected that these Thracian troops,
Though hired for Asia, were for Sparta meant.
If it prove so, I may be useful here:
My valiant brother bears a generous mind,
And, though of arms enamour'd, justice loves.

Agis. Haste to your valiant brother, and explain,
With an impartial tongue, the state of Sparta.
Shew him where justice, and where honour stand.
If these are sacred, as thou say'st they are,
To gallant Euxus, he may prove a friend.

Lysan. Exert the strong persuasion of a brother;
And tell him, Rhesus, if he loves bright arms,
And that immortal glory valour gains,
No more to wield a mercenary sword,

But plant himself with thee in Sparta's soil,
Where Agis will his noble nature cherish,
And rear his courage to such lofty deeds,
As ancient story tells of Sparta's chiefs.

[*Exit* RHESUS.

Agis. I hope that Rhesus will divide the Thracians:
This favours well the bias of my mind,
Averse to leave the city on suspicion,
And drive the wavering faction to extremes.

Lysan. O generous prince! whom I admire and blame.
The greatest foe, the foe Lysander dreads,
Is the unequall'd gentleness of Agis.
Review the story of the Grecian states,
And mark how freedom fell in every land.
The brave asserters of the public cause
Have ever been too mild in evil times;
Have, like indulgent parents, spared the rod,
And let the vices of their children live
To kill the virtues. Hence let Agis learn
The only lesson that his nature needs.

Agis. Uncertain is the peril if I stay,
But certain is the evil if I fly.

I will remain; but to assure my safety,
You must, Lysander, to the troops return.

Lysan. And leave my prince alone amidst his foes?—
Revoke the hard command! if you're resolved
To brave the peril, then my place I claim
Next to your person; by your side I stand;
Perhaps some noble service I may render,
Receive the mortal wound aim'd at my prince,
And with my life redeem the life of Agis.

Agis. Your great imagination's up in arms;
But hear me, and let calmer reason judge.
I am determin'd not to quit the city.
The guilt of civil war shall not be mine.
Lysander's presence here without the troops,
Would but embolden and excite my foes,
Who may be tempted by this fair occasion,
This mighty vantage, to surprise us both.
Without delay, once more, Lysander, arm,
And ostentatiously pass through the gate.
This victory, and the approaching host
Will hush the threaten'd storm.

Lysan. So may it prove.
But there is something in my heart rebels
Against this counsel! Oh! I cannot leave you—

Nor ought I now to stay. Let never man
Say in the morning that the day's his own:
Things past belong to memory alone;
Things future are the property of hope.
The narrow line, the isthmus of these seas,
The instant scarce divisible, is all
That mortals have to stand on. O, my prince!
Lysander leaves you with a heavy heart.

Agis. Farewell, thou Spartan of the ancient mould,
Dear as the brother of his blood to Agis!—

[*They embrace and part.*

Lysander!

Lysan. Ha! may heaven your purpose change!

Agis. My will is fix'd. But though my judgment too
Confirms the secret counsel of my heart,
Yet I may be deceived; perhaps, my friend,
We part this moment ne'er to meet again.

Lysan. Let us not part at all. 'Tis inspiration,
The guardian god, the demon of the mind,
Thus often presses on the human breast.

Agis. Mistake me not, I feel no new impression,
Nor, if I did, should I by that be alter'd;

For such presages, be they sad or joyful,
I deem them but the meteors of the mind,
Bred by the inward elemental strife,
When great events perplex and shake the soul.
My thoughts regard the state. If I should fall,
To thee, Lysander, I commit my son,
The only pledge of my Deidamia's love.
Train up the boy to walk in the same path
Which we have trod together, the straight path
Of virtue and true glory. If he proves
Of noble nature, and I hope no less,
He will not shun the lofty path of honour,
Though fate should mark it with his father's blood.

Lysan. Hear this, immortal Gods, who rule the world,
And guard a prince the image of yourselves!
O never, never may his royal race
Lysander's aid require. [*Exit* LYSANDER.

AGIS *alone.*

Affection choaks his words.
His generous heart bursts at this solemn parting.
In times like these of a declining state,
Baseness infects the general race of men;
But yet these trying times rear up a few

More excellent, refined and conscious spirits,
More principled, and fit for all events,
Than any in the good, but equal mass
Of a far better age. Such is Lysander.
The hour draws near.

Enter Senators.

Sen. Assembled Sparta waits.

Agis. I come, my friends! I will address the people,
Proclaim aloud mine actions, which upbraid,
And soon shall silence, my despiteful foes.
My heart shall speak. This sceptre of my fathers,
By long descent hereditary mine,
I would disdain to hold, did I not hope,
That by its sway I might recal those days
When Lacedæmon was the pride of Greece,
The gaze and terror of the wond'ring world:
For there, as in a chosen temple, dwelt
Valour and virtue, whilst attending fame
And glory on the land of heroes shone.

1 *Sen.* O Gods above! how happy were our sires,
In those bright days of ancient glory born.

Agis. Those days shall yet return, Olympian Jove!

Or low in dust shall Spartan Agis lie.

[*Sound of musical instruments.*

1 *Sen.* What means this music?

Agis. To the Gods of Greece
And Sparta's guardian deities it sounds.
Let us begone, nor stop the holy train. [*Exeunt.*

Enter a Procession.

AGESISTRATA, EUANTHE, *Priests of* JUPITER *and* HERCULES.

Chorus of Matrons and Virgins.

Woes approach till now unknown;
Discord shakes the Spartan throne.
Heaven avert the ills we fear!
Jove, from high Olympus, hear!

Priests of JUPITER.

This day our foes embattled came,
And vow'd to end the Spartan name:
Embattled near our gates they fought;
But Jove for us deliverance wrought.
He smote Achaia's host with fear,
He thunder'd in their trembling rear;
Jove's lightning flamed from Sparta's spear.

Chorus of Matrons and Virgins.

Ever may his mighty arm
Save the Spartan state from harm!
Ne'er may proud invader boast
Glory from our glory lost.
Light, O Jove, that sacred fire
Which did Sparta's sons inspire,
When the prince and people strove,
Burning with their country's love.
Xerxes, lord of great alarms,
Xerxes roused the world to arms.

Priests of JUPITER.

The earth was troubled at his host,
The springs were dried, the rivers lost;
But Spartan valour check'd his pride,
A slender band his host defied:
Thermopylæ (immortal name!)
Beheld the Persian tyrant's shame.

Chorus of all.

There the brave Three Hundred died,
Faithful by their prince's side:
There they conquer'd, though they died.

Priests of HERCULES.

On earth below, in heaven above,
Revered, victorious, son of Jove!
Hear, Alcides, hear our prayer,
Thy godlike offspring claims thy care.

Chorus of all.

Bend thy bow, Tyrinthius, bend,
Lightly on the earth descend.
Fix an arrow on the string,
Stand beside the Spartan king,
Agis of thy race divine,
Tried in labours like to thine.
Undaunted, like thee, with monsters he strives;
The fiercest of Hydras in faction revives.
If he falls a sacrifice,
Never more shall Sparta rise! [*Exeunt.*

As the Procession goes off, enter AMPHARES.

Amph. Thus may my pious foes for ever strive,
Be theirs the airy aid of fabled Jove.
In nearer and more certain force I trust:
Of human race, I fight with mortal arms.
Yet, praised be Fortune, goddess of my vows,

'Tis she whose happy hand leads forth these dames;
Ne'er to the palace shall their steps return.
The net I've spread now covers all my foes,
Except Lysander: O had he been here!
Then I had stood, like mighty Atlas firm;
Fate but reserves him to another day.
The time is almost come; my Thracians now
Have reach'd their post; and many a daring eye
Looks for the signal. Here it is—my sword.
When I appear thus arm'd, the furies rise;
This is the comet, the fierce blazing star,
On which commotion, change, and death attend.

[*Exit* AMPHARES.

ACT III.

SCENE,—*A Court, &c. as before.*

Enter EUANTHE.

Athenian Pallas! O my native Gods!
Protect your suppliant in a foreign land!
Where shall I fly? O Agis! O Lysander!

Enter LYSANDER *in a Helot's garb.*

Helot, if pity, or if gold——

Lysan. Euanthe!

Euan. O heaven and earth! Lysander!

Lysan. Yes, my love!

Thou see'st Lysander, miserable man!
Does Agis live?

Euan. Amidst the clash of arms,
And cries of fighting men, I heard them shout
The name of Agis. By and by a Spartan,
Flying and wounded, as he pass'd, call'd out,
"The king is safe; the king has gain'd the temple."

Lysan. Then all is safe ; for Sparta lives in him.

Euan. But the good queen !

Lysan. Her sex, her age protects her.

Euan. Heaven grant they may ; an impious band in arms
Pursued the holy train. Fear gave me speed,
For I outstript them all. But now, Lysander,
Betray'd, encompass'd, now what shall we do ?

Lysan. Wert thou but safely placed, Lysander knows
What he should do. I must not tarry here.
There is a temple in this spacious city,
For sanctity above all others famed,
To Juno sacred, the avenging Queen !
Thither a trusty slave of Agis' house
Will guide thy steps ; by my command he waits
Without the palace.

Euan. Whither dost thou go ?

Lysan. In this inglorious garb disguised, I wait
Till night and darkness come ; then I attempt
The wall, where'er I find it slightly guarded.
What mortal arm shall then oppose my way,
Urged as I am ! Alas, my loved Euanthe !
From my compliance with thy fond request
Springs the worst evil of this dreadful hour.

I have betray'd the confidence of Agis:
But I'll repair my fault.

Euan. What dost thou mean?

Lysan. Agis commanded me to leave the city,
And thinks,—would to the Gods he thought aright!
That his Lysander heads the Spartan troops,
In whom his only hope of safety lies.
But I, Euanthe! partial to thy will,
Sought thee in vain. In that unhappy time
They seized the gates, and shut me up in Sparta.
Fate punishes with too severe a doom
The human weakness of indulgent love.
Agis! I come!—For the deep voices now
Of duty, friendship, gratitude, and glory,
Sound through my breast, and from my beating heart
Their echo rings. Farewell! my love, farewell!

Euan. Not yet, Lysander! Agis is opprest,
And Sparta too. Does duty, or does honour
Require Lysander, like an eastern slave,
To fall attendant on the royal pile?
What can you do? The army will betray you:
So with the few, the faithful few that love you,
You'll do some desperate action, and be slain.

If you despise your life, yet think of me,
The prey of curst Amphares.

Lysan. Infernal Gods!
Let me not think of that. Retire, Euanthe,
And in the hallow'd temple rest secure.
This night I'll force ill-guided Sparta's gates,
And save my prince, my country, and Euanthe.

Euan. Thy prince, thy country, are already lost.
O listen, and preserve thyself and me:
The ship that bore me to the Spartan shore
Rides still at anchor: leave this wretched land.
Where'er thou go'st I will attend thy steps;
Thy gods shall be my gods; thy people, mine.

Lysan. Alas! Euanthe does not see the shame,
The ruin of that counsel love inspires.
The eternal Gods repose this hour in me
No common trust: Upon my deeds depend
The fate of Agis, and the fate of Sparta.
My soldiers too, my brave, my faithful soldiers,
The meanest warrior of the royal band
Freely devotes his life to godlike Agis.
And shall their leader, shall the friend of Agis,
Forsake his prince? I will forget thy words;
Repeat them not.

Euan. Is this Lysander's love?
Must I not speak? Is my reward reproach?
For you I left my friends and native land,
Defy'd all danger, and all censure scorn'd;
Now in my sore distress I call on thee
For whom I suffer, to protect my honour,
And in my sore distress dost thou upbraid me?
If ever maid, like credulous Euanthe,
Bursts all the bonds of nature for one man,
Let her beware that he be not a Spartan!
O wretched maid! O Athens lost in vain!
[*Ready to faint.*

Lysan. All-ruling powers! why am I thus distrest?
Why come calamities so thick upon me?
Euanthe, hear me; you shall be obey'd.
I'll bear thee hence, and go with thee to Athens,
Restore thee to thy country and thy friends,
Of whom thou dost complain I have bereft thee.
Lysander will acquit himself to thee,
And to mankind—

Euan. Delude me not. Alas!
Thy tongue speaks comfort; but thy voice, thy looks,

Wild and unsettled, drive me to despair:
For thou, methinks, art desperate, Lysander.
Those lips that quiver, and those eyes that roll
Like dragon's eyes, those are not signs of love!
Thou say'st that thou wilt bear me back to Athens;
Will that acquit thee, if thou leavest me there?
Is that thy purpose?

Lysan. Yes. I'll leave the world,
And death shall wipe dishonour from my name;
Agis and Sparta shall forgive me then,
And every debt be paid.

Euan. Lysander, no.
Love's victims are not of your sterner sex.
It is the destiny of womankind
Constant to live, and desolate to die.
To strong necessity Euanthe yields.
If I should tear you from the side of Agis,
I see my fate; you ne'er would love me more:
Though you should live, yet you would die to me.
But I will rather stay and perish here,
Than live without thee. Go, and fight for Agis;
But in the hour of danger think of me!
Calm in the rear direct the course of battle,
The dreadful van let other warriors lead,
In whom nor Agis nor Euanthe lives.

Lysan. These words become my idolized Euanthe!
And honour now approves the voice of love.
O, thou first object of my young desires,
And through each period of my ripening years
Still more maturely and intensely loved,
Hear and believe my words—Beware—Beware!

Enter AMPHARES.

[*To his People.*] 'Tis she, by Venus! halt.—Fear not, my fair,
Nor meditate escape from your Amphares.

Euan. My Amphares!

Amph. Thine, and thine alone!—
Thou low'ring slave, begone! Haste! urge me not
To stain my sword with thy ignoble blood.

[*Exit* LYSANDER.

Euan. Is this thy love? Imperious, and in arms,
Recent from blood and treason, dost thou come
To take by force and violence my heart?

Amph. The love of thee, more powerful than ambition,
Inflamed me to attempt the Spartan throne.
Thy beauty is the torch that lights the war:
For thee I conquer—Smile not thus in scorn:
Deign to accept my hand and Sparta's crown.

Euan. Dost thou bestow the diadem of Sparta?
Where is thy lawful prince?

Amph. Leonidas?

Euan. Agis.

Amph. That Agis is no more a king:
A suppliant, surrounded by my troops,
In Juno's temple, with the priests he dwells.
Leonidas, by me restored to power,
Will gladly share with me divided empire.
Or, if I please to reign alone, I may.
Through dark conspiracy and open strife,
For thee I strove; thou wilt reward my love.
Beauty, like thine, pertains not to the vanquish'd,
But still triumphant reigns the victor's queen.

Euan. Think'st thou there is no truth in human breasts,
No faithful loyalty, no constant love?
Soon shalt thou learn thine error. I begin
To teach thee first. Thee and thy love I scorn!
And may the gods reward thy base ambition
As I reward thy love.

Amph. O womankind!
How well your passions teach us to be just!
You love Lysander still; a little time
Will from your mind erase the memory

Of that vain-glorious, lost, and ruin'd man,
Who was my rival.

Euan. Was! whate'er he was
He is, and more. Thou and thy crimes contribute
To make him more illustrious, more beloved.
Thou givest him scope and vantage to his virtue.
Speak'st thou of crowns whilst royal Agis reigns?
Of power in Sparta whilst Lysander lives?
The short dominion of this day is thine;
But vengeance and Lysander come to-morrow.

Amph. Thou do'st instruct me. If my time is short,
We should not part. I'll see thee safely placed
Where I command.

Euan. I will not go with thee.

Amph. Yield to necessity; for on my call
Compulsion waits. No other hand than mine
Should touch Euanthe. [*Seizes her hand.*

Euan. Help, Spartans, help!
If any hear me who regard Lysander.

Enter LYSANDER *with a dagger, and runs at* AMPHARES, *who retires.*

Amph. Assist me, friends. Surround him—'Tis Lysander.
Take him alive. [*To his People who enter.*

Lysan. No. That they cannot, traitor!

[*Snatches a Sword from one of the Soldiers.*

Now I am better arm'd.

Amph. Kill him, Euxus,

Unless he yield his sword.

Lysan. Come, brave Amphares!

Come to the front, and there direct my fate.

Amph. Kill him!

Eux. That would dishonour me for ever.—

Advance on all sides, and close in upon him.

Lysan. Strangers, give way, and let the Spartan chiefs

Fight their own quarrels. I will give you all

The wealth of Sparta.

Amph. Ha! he grows upon them!

Throw down your weapons, or I'll pierce her heart!

[*Points his Sword to* EUANTHE'S *breast.*

Eux. Renown'd Lysander! give thy sword to Euxus.

Euan. Defend thy noble life! Regard not mine.

[AMPHARES *lifts his arm.*

Lysan. Hold, hold.

Amph. Thou know'st me. Chuse.

Lysan. I cannot bear to see Euanthe die!
[*Throws down his Sword.*
O Agis! O my prince!
Amph. Victorious chief,
Statesman and soldier, learned Athens' boast,
Where are thy glories now?
Lysan. The strife of tongues
I shun, as thou didst shun the strife of arms.
Amph. Yet let thy haughtiness grant one request.
Tell me what brought the great Lysander hither?
Some stratagem profound; which none but he
Could have contrived to hasten his destruction,
And add disgrace and ridicule to ruin.
Lysan. Hadst thou not fled, thou coward, from my sword,
And shriek'd for help, this arm, this single arm,
Had baffled all the craft of false Amphares.
Amph. This pride becomes thee, and thy lost condition.
Lysan. In this condition it becomes me best
To brave Amphares. Had he been a captive,
I should have pitied him.
Amph. Plead'st thou for pity?
Lysan. For none that thou canst give. Hear me, then judge,

If what I speak is meant to win thy favour.
I should have pitied thee by fate subdued:
Oppress with crimes, thy spirit would have shrunk
Under calamity, and guilt have marr'd
The noble vigour and the port of manhood.
Amidst thy triumph, does it not confound thee,
To think thou ow'st it to excess of baseness?
Thou hast prevail'd, because the generous Agis
Would not believe there could be such a traitor.

Amph. Oft have I heard, and often seen thy folly;
But now to rail is madness. With one word
I could impose on thee eternal silence.

Lysan. And would—I know thee—if thou thought'st it wise.

Even then, as now, I should contemn thy power:
But know, I fear thee not. The king is safe,
And his victorious troops at break of day
Will thunder in thine ears: thou and thy band
Will ill sustain the shock of such an host.
My life is in thy hands, but yet beware,
Thy fate depends on mine. In Lacedæmon
A prince like Agis soon will find Lysanders.

Amph. Uncertain thy predictions of the future:
Small is thy prescience, witness thy condition.—
Euxus, conduct him to yon corner tower.

Euan. Lysander!

Lysan. Oh! I have withdrawn my eyes
From thee, and to contention turn'd my heart.

Euan. Yet look on me before we part for ever.

Lysan. At looks or words of tenderness he'll smile,
And o'er the sorrows of our love rejoice:
Forgive me still, I must not, cannot speak.

Euan. But I will speak, and earth and heaven shall hear me.
Amphares too shall hear; for it will gall him
To hear Euanthe now avow her love
And faith to her Lysander. Powerful words,
Emblems and figures of firm constancy,
Such as fond lovers lavishly employ
To sooth the pangs of parting and of absence,
Such music vows accord not with our state,
Our dreadful state: yet do not grieve thy heart,
Thy noble heart, too full of other sorrows,
With thoughts of what may happen to Euanthe.
Nothing shall happen to debase Euanthe.
The bondage and the shame that women suffer,
Who live the slaves of those who slew their lords,
I ne'er shall know, I never will endure.
If cruel destiny decrees thy fall,

Unspotted to the shades I'll follow thee,
For whom alone on earth I'd wish to live.

Lysan. Lead on.—Farewell, Euanthe!

Euan. Gods above!

Amph. Conduct her to the tower where late you lodged
The captive queen.

Euan. Alas! no guarded tower,
Or vaulted dungeon, ever yet contain'd
Two more unhappy, or more helpless captives!

[*Exeunt guarded.*

Amph. Lysander's fierce demeanour and his threats,
Proud as he is, spring not from pride alone;
I must stretch forth my arms to shelter'd Agis.
If I accomplish not this night his ruin,
To-morrow's rising sun may see my fall.
Curst be the temples! curst the priests of Sparta!
Now I am like a man who has adventured
To cross the flats forsaken by the main,
And looking back sees not the shore he left;
Through deeps and shallows, rocks, and quaking sands,
On he must go. To stop is sure perdition.

Enter SANDANE.

Hail to the Queen of Sparta!

San. Yes, Amphares:

Now fortune seems to smile upon Sandane.
I saw the sullen captive led along,
His gloomy eye-balls fix'd upon the earth.

Amph. This night, O Queen! must see the bold conclusion
Of a design, thus far so bravely borne.
On hollow and deceitful ground we tread,
Whilst Agis lives.

San. Thou speak'st my very thoughts.
Seasons there are, Amphares, which suspend
All sanctimonious reverence and respect.

Amph. Temples, and priests, and altars shall not save him,
If fate should drive us to the last extreme.
Meanwhile, I will employ more gentle means
To gain our ends: For sacrilege would rouse
The zealous multitude to rage and arms.
The temple is begirt with Thracian bands,
Who all access forbid: and Agis knows not
What has befall'n Lysander. I will send
A subtle Spartan in Lysander's name,

Who may by specious arguments persuade him
To quit the sanctuary ; and then, O Queen !
With all solemnity of pomp and form,
The assembled Ephori shall pass his doom,
And in the same decree include Lysander.

San. Think'st thou the Ephori will give the sanction
Of their authority to Agis' death ?

Amph. They will. At midnight the stern judges meet
In Terror's temple ; they have charged a herald
With orders to the troops not to advance
On pain of treason. The astonish'd people
Will crouch and tremble at that awful power,
Which draws the sword of justice on a king.
Then shall your lord's authority revive ;
And like the sun, when bursting from a cloud,
With greater power and brighter splendour shine.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

LYSANDER *as a Prisoner, the Thracian Guards at a distance.*

LYSANDER *musing, advances and speaks.*

Has virtue no prerogative on earth ?
And can the Gods permit the fall of Agis ?
They can. 'Tis man's own arrogance arrays him
In gorgeous titles of excelling nature,
Care of the Gods, and centre of creation.
I fear—I fear man's life is but a dream ;
His soul a subtle essence of the blood,
A rainbow beauty, made to shine a space,
Then melt and vanish into air.
Ye mighty minds of sages and of heroes !
Epaminondas, Plato, great Lycurgus !
Who once with such transcendent glory shone,
Brighter than all the stars that deck the heavens,
Is your celestial fire for ever quench'd,
And nought but ashes left, the sport of chance,

Which veering winds still blow about the world?
I will not think so! Yet, alas! the while
I see and feel presages that alarm.
If they prove true, if man is like the leaf,
Which falling from the tree revives no more,
I shall be shortly dust, that will not hear
Euanthe weep, nor see the shame of Sparta!
Now I'm a living man, my mind is free,
And, whilst I live and breathe, by heaven I'll act
As if I were immortal.

Enter RHESUS *and* EUXUS.

Rhe. See where he stands! behold him, O my brother!
The bravest and the best of human kind.
Oppress with grief and shame, and fatal love,
Indignant virtue but augments his pain.
Will not my Euxus give his aid to heave
This noble vessel from the rock it beats on?—
[*Goes up to* LYSANDER.
My lord! my leader! Oh!

Lysan. My faithful Rhesus!
Comest thou to share the ruin that Lysander
Has brought upon himself, his prince, his country?

Rhe. I come more eager and more proud to share
Thy present fortune, than thy former glory.
Alas, my lord! 'twould make a stranger weep,
To see the chief, whom conquest crown'd to-day,
A captive.

Lysan. Rhesus, thou hast named the least
Of my calamities. I could endure,
With Spartan fortitude, my own disasters;
Bear to be hurled from meridian glory,
And, like a fallen star, be seen no more:
But, oh! the king!—and desolate Euanthe!

Rhe. Do not despair.

Lysan. Thou art my only hope,
This day thy generous brother saved my life;
At his request I yielded up my sword,
Else had Lysander like a soldier fall'n.
Thou art my friend in noble perils proved.
My fate, the fate of Sparta, and of Agis,
Is in the hands of Euxus——

Rhe. Ah! my brother!

Eux. O chief of Sparta! Euxus is distrest
On every side. Thy virtue, thy misfortunes,
Have touch'd my heart: but here in trust I stand.
Would I had never seen the walls of Sparta!

Lysan. The Gods, the guardian Gods of Lacedæmon,
Have brought you hither to preserve a people,
And save from traitors' hands the best of kings.
Although at first you rashly drew the sword
In blind obedience to a leader's will,
The gallant Euxus will not sure persist
In error known, in manifest injustice.
Thy trade is war, brave soldier; this is not
An office for thy sword.

Eux. True are thy words;
I was indeed deceived, and came not here
To mix in Sparta's strife; but honour now——

Rhe. I will not hear thee plead so bad a cause.
Is there a bond in nature like the tie
Which binds the hearts of brothers? And will Euxus,
From vain ideas of fidelity
To that detested traitor, false Amphares,
His brother murder?

Eux. No.

Rhe. Then let thy arms
Defend Lysander. By our country's Gods
I swear, and by our warlike father's soul,

Whose well-beloved son thou ever wert,
That with the Spartan chief thy brother dies.

Lysan. Might you not favour the escape of Agis?

The guards are Thracians.

Eux. I might favour thine.
My power extends not to the guards of Agis.

Rhe. And wilt thou not?

Eux. Command thyself, my brother.

Rhe. How canst thou hesitate?

Eux. I must beware;
Inferior in command to bold Rhinalces,
And ever view'd by him with jealous eyes.
Whilst I deliberate, no time is lost.
The light of day suits not with your designs;
Before the night comes on, I will determine.

Lysan. 'Tis almost night, the sun hath left the heavens,
And doubtful twilight ushers in the gloom.
Perhaps the enemies of Agis wait
The darkness of the night to cover deeds
They dare not act by day. This night I dread——

Rhe. The Ephori have sent a herald forth,
Charged with some solemn menace, and command
To stop the army's march.

Lysan. If they obey,
The fane of Juno guards the king no more!
Eternal Gods! how wretched is Lysander!
From me that herald should have heard his answer.
Cannot my Rhesus find one gallant Spartan
To bear my orders to the royal band
To storm the city?

Rhe. I myself will bear
These orders to the camp.

Lysan. Another task,
More difficult and dangerous, is thine.
Assume the arms and vesture of thy country,
And through the Thracians win thy way to Agis.
Rhesus, the generous spirit of that prince
Is of a nature that excludes all fear,
Consideration, and respect of self:
On earth he acts as if he were a god,
Immortal, and incapable of harm.
Think how the artful falsehood of Amphares
May operate on such a royal mind.

Enter a Thracian.

Thra. The Spartan lord draws near.

Eux. Amphares comes.

Retire, my lord, whilst I advance to meet him:
Our intercourse might lead him to suspicion.

Lysan. Nor vigilance nor care I recommend
To thee, my Rhesus! But let caution rule
Thy forward zeal.

Rhe. It shall, my noble lord:
My heart beats high with hope to see thee rise
Once more, like Mars, in arms.

Lysan. Eternal Gods!
In Thracian breasts the Spartan virtue lives.

[LYSANDER *enters into the Tower.*

[*Exit* RHESUS.

Manet EUXUS.

Enter AMPHARES.

Amph. How does the haughty captive brook confinement?

Eux. Full of inquietude he seems, and sadness.
Now in some pensive posture sits a while,
Then smites his breast, and, starting from his seat,
Walks to and fro with a disorder'd pace.

Amph. Admit no Spartan of whatever sex,
Or whatsoe'er affinity they claim.

Eux. That strict command hath been already given.

Amph. 'Tis needful, Euxus; for his furious mind,
In this extreme, will snatch at slight occasions
To make incredible and wild attempts.
Renew the charge; then go and search Lysander
For secret weapons. On his breast he wears
A curious gorget, rich with precious stones,
And a small portrait of surpassing beauty,
The image of the fair Athenian maid,
Drawn by an artist who has vied with nature
In sweet expression of her matchless charms:
That I must have.

Eux. You shall without delay. [*Exit* EUXUS.

Manet AMPHARES.

Let other men deprive themselves of pleasure,
And toil for bare ambition; I'll provide
A more luxurious banquet to my taste.
What though as yet Euanthe loves me not,
It is the nature of her sex to change.
With wondrous ease the female kind submit
To destiny, and soon are reconciled
To persons and conditions once abhorr'd.

Like birds new caught, who flutter for a time,
And struggle with captivity in vain;
But by and by they rest; they smooth their plumes,
And to new masters sing their former notes.
This facile temper of the beauteous sex
Great Agamemnon, brave Pelides, proved:
They sack'd the cities, and they slew the sires,
The brothers, and the lovers of the fair,
Who weep'd awhile, then wiped their wat'ry eyes,
And lost their sorrows in the hero's arms.

Enter SANDANE.

San. The herald is return'd. The royal band,
Inflamed with rage and scorn, the mandate tore;
And to the city bend their rapid march.

Amph. Let them advance. They hasten to their fate.
A secret stratagem I have devised
To check these warriors in their bold career.

San. The Ephori in resolution faint——

Amph. Their courage I'll restore; for Agis yields
To the fallacious counsellor I sent.
Democharès, in sacerdotal robes,
As if disguised to elude the Thracian guards,
Past in by my permission, and conjured

Agis to quit the fane's uncertain shelter,
And seek the sure protection of the camp ;
Himself he offer'd as his faithful guide.
This in Lysander's name. Agis at first,
Irresolute and doubtful, balanced much :
At last this thought sprung up, and turn'd the scale :
That his escape would force us to submission,
And end the strife without the shock of arms.
Democharès at midnight is appointed
To come again ; and goes with an addition
That will give certain credence to his words ;
The gorget of Lysander.

San. Now, Amphares,
I see the snares of death are wrapt around him ;
Our hated foe stands on the verge of fate :
He who despised Sandane, and permitted,
With most insulting courtesy, my stay ;
I would not have remain'd one day in Sparta,
But for the hope I had to work his ruin.
He is the root, with him the branches fall.

Amph. Although his son is safe in Orchomenos,
Yet there in hopeless exile he must live.
But Agesistrata——

San. Shall not survive
To travel suppliant through the states of Greece,
And shew her hoary hairs with ashes strew'd,
To move compassion in the giddy Greeks.
She's old, and fit to die.

Enter a Spartan Messenger.

Mess. The Thracian troops
Who guard the temple, faithful to their charge,
Have seized a spy, who, clothed and arm'd like them,
Attempted to pass through their ranks to Agis.
Rhinalces for a while delay'd the doom
That martial law decrees, till you yourself
Discourse and judge the captive.

Amph. I approve
The vigilance and conduct of Rhinalces.

[*Exit Messenger.*

San. Still flows the tide of fortune; I'll dispatch
Orontes to my lord. Joyful he comes
To re-assume his sceptre and his throne.
Farewell restraint, and laws that bind a prince!
The people's majesty, the senate's power,
Shall shrink beneath their awful monarch's sword.

Fear is the only principle of rule,
Which man, like other animals, obeys.

[*Exit* SANDANE.

Manet AMPHARES.

Amph. Why tarries Euxus now?

Enter EUXUS.

I must applaud
Thy countrymen for discipline and care,
As well as valour; they have seiz'd a spy,
Who mix'd with them, disguised in Thracian arms.

Euxus. In Thracian arms!

Amph. Yes, to pass to Agis.
Some bold adventurer of the royal band,
Whose life—Why art thou troubled? Has Lysander
Escaped the guards?

Euxus. No. I am pale with anger,
At the reproachful terms, the bitter taunts,
Which I have suffer'd from incensed Lysander,
In execution of thy late commands.

[*Gives the gorget.*

Amph. Is that the cause?

He soon shall be no object of thy wrath.

[*Exit* AMPHARES.

Manent EUXUS.

Euxus. My brother seized! I hesitate no more.
The voice of nature in my breast exclaims
Against the rigour of those guilty laws,
Which bind a soldier blindly to obey.
Son of my mother! Brother of my blood!
I fly to save thee.—Now I'm thine, Lysander.

[*Goes to the gate of the tower.*

Chief of Sparta!

Enter LYSANDER.

Lysan. Is Euxus yet resolved?

Euxus. That thou shalt see, thy enemies are mine.

Rhesus is taken.

Lysan. My contagious fate
Infects my friends! my brave, my generous Rhesus!

Euxus. Friend of my brother! first I set thee free.

An officer of mine commands that gate
At which the Thracians enter'd; haste thee thither,

Array'd like one of those whom I will send
To guide thy steps.

Lysan. Ye guardian gods of Greece!
Whose ways mysterious rashly I arraign'd,
Forgive my rashness! Prosper now my sword—
Where are my arms?

[*Whilst* LYSANDER *speaks,* EUXUS *beckons one of his soldiers.*

Euxus. Here enter, and obey
Without reply. [*Exeunt* LYSANDER *and the Thracian to the tower.*
The soldiers' hearts are mine.
Their various toils and perils I have shared,
Nay more than shared, the first in hard extremes,
When signal danger claims a leader's sword.
No spoil, no treasure, have I e'er reserved;
The wealth I covet is the soldier's love.
My bold Odrysians are a faithful band;
In this distress I'll throw myself on them;
They will support me.

Enter a Spartan Messenger.

Mess. Leader of Thracian bands!
Amphares and the magistrates of Sparta,
Met in the senate-house, expect thy presence.

Euxus. I will attend them. [*Exit Messenger.*
Surely they have learn'd,
That I am brother to ill-fated Rhesus.

Enter LYSANDER, *in Thracian dress and arms.*

Lysan. Once more at liberty! Once more in arms!
To thee, brave Thracian——

Euxus. I am summon'd hence
To meet the Ephori. I fear, my lord,
They have discover'd Rhesus is my brother.

Lysan. That secret in your breast and his is lodged:
Nor can his alter'd features now betray him.
In early youth he left his native land;
The heat of summer, and the winter's cold,
In many a hard campaign, have chaced his bloom.

Euxus. Indeed I knew him not.

Lysan. Then who could know him?
Calm and determined to the senate go:
Here I'll remain, and wait your quick return.
To know what they design imports us much.

Euxus. Your stay is full of danger; risk it not.

Lysan. All necessary dangers must be risk'd.
Perhaps I am the subject of their councils.

Perhaps I may be call'd before the senate!
If I appear not, you must be discover'd,
And my escape too soon to them be known.

Euxus. Your reasons are of force. I am convinced.
Here, take my sword. Then, if we are betray'd,
My troops obey you. Now, my bold Sithontes,
[*To one of his Thracians.*
Draw your battalion nearer to the square,
And guard the person of this Spartan chief
As you would guard myself. If I'm detain'd,
Follow to death or victory Lysander.
[*Exit* EUXUS.

Lysan. Shall I obey the impulse of my heart,
And lead these Thracians to the tower that holds
My lost Euanthe? No, let reason rule.
Amphares will not, dares not wrong her honour,
Whilst undecided is the fate of Agis.
'Tis night, but never shall the morning rise
On—Who can know the secret will of heav'n!
Down, down, enthusiasm! my heart be calm!
A little while, and thou shalt beat no more.
Oft have I wish'd for perilous occasions;
And, wand'ring in the academic grove,
Have roused myself with strong imagination

Of great exploits by ardent valour done:
But ne'er did fancy's tempest match the truth,
The strong reality of such a storm.
O did I combat but for life alone,
Were Sparta and Euanthe safe spectators,
How gaily should Lysander take the field.—
Euxus draws near—Upon the insect wing
Of a small moment ride th' eternal fates.

Enter EUXUS.

Euxus. My fears are vain. The secret is unknown.
But Rhesus is condemn'd to die to-morrow.

Lysan. To-morrow! many men will die to-morrow,
Who are not yet condemn'd.

Euxus. 'Tis true, by heav'n!
Mortal designs and enterprizes rise
On every side. The Ephori resolve
At midnight to surprise the royal band,
And order'd me to hold my troops prepared
Their forces to sustain.

Lysan. 'Tis well! 'tis wondrous well
They urge me now, and point the line of action.
Under the high up-lifted arm of fate

I'll rush, and strike before their blow can fall.
I'll storm the city while they force the camp.
Your troops——

Euxus. Shall join you at the gate. The word?

Lysan. Agis. Farewell!—Now I shall save thee, Agis,
Or leave my blood upon the stones of Sparta.

[*Exeunt* LYSANDER *and* EUXUS.

ACT V.

AMPHARES *and the Ephori with the Officers, &c. The gate of the prison seen at a distance.*

1. *Epho.* The hour is past.
2. *Epho.* I fear——
Amph. Silence. He comes.
I hear the steps of wary treading feet.

Enter a Spartan. AGIS *following.*

Agis. This way conducts not to Amycla's gate.
Ah! whither dost thou lead me?
Amph. To thy death.
The Ephori of Sparta have condemn'd thee.
Agis. I am betray'd! What mockery is this
Of sacred justice? Lay aside the robes
And ensigns of authority prophaned:
The pomp of magistracy suits not treason.

Amph. The licence of thy tongue affronts the laws,
Where awful rev'rence our high office bears.
Agis. Know ye not this, ye guardians of the laws,
The meanest citizen of Lacedæmon
Without free trial cannot be condemn'd;
Much less your king. What law have I transgress'd?
Point out my crime; produce my bold accusers.
Amph. Thy crime is tyranny.
Agis. Is that my crime?
Had Agis been a tyrant, thou had'st been
His fawning slave, thou enemy of freedom!
Amph. Behold the stubborn spirit of this man:
He breathes his native arrogance, and still
Insults his judges, and avows his crimes.
Agis. Who made you judges of the life of Agis?
But you have judged: yourselves, and earth, and heav'n,
Know how unjustly. To the gods above,
The sure avengers of a murder'd king,
I make my last appeal. Their messenger
Is on the wing; Lysander comes apace;
And Nemesis directs his righteous sword.

Amph. Proceeds this boldness from thy trust in him?
Thy great avenger is, like thee, a captive,
And under the same mortal sentence lies.
Agis. Ye powers above! Lysander too a captive!
Where was he taken?
Amph. In the streets of Sparta,
Clad in the servile garment of a Helot.
Agis. Alas! alas! Lysander! O my friend!
Thy love for me, thy generous, fearless love,
Has wrought thy fall. For me thou camest to Sparta,
And, like the parent bird hov'ring too near
Its captive young, thy noble life is lost!——
Forgive these tears, my country! Agis weeps
For thee. Alas! thy brave defender's gone!
O Lacedæmon, thou art fall'n for ever!
Thy bad estate shall every day grow worse;
Successive tyrants shall exhaust thy strength,
Till all thy generous youths have bled in vain;
At last the consummation of thy woes
Shall come upon thee; some ambitious foe
Shall stretch the iron arm of conquest forth,
And grasp thee in the circle of his empire.
My native land, the kingdom of my fathers,

Shall be no more a nation! O my country,
How irretrievable is thy condition!
The Macedonian vulture hovers o'er thee,
Soon to descend, and on thy vitals prey.

Amph. Thou may'st delay, perhaps avoid, thy death.

Send forth thy mandate to the royal band
To halt till further orders.

Agis. Ha! No more
I trust thee, traitor. Would I had ever been
Thus deaf to thee! No, let the royal band
Revenge their gallant leader and their king.

1 *Epho.* Thou tempt'st thy fate.

Agis. I scorn it. Since my hope
Of Sparta's lost, and my beloved friend
Has perish'd in my cause, why should I live?
In any period of my former days
I rather would have chose to die attempting
The glorious design, which you have ruin'd,
Than live the prince of a degenerate people,
The tame spectator of a falling empire.

1 *Epho.* To reason hearken.

Agis. Reason bids me die,
As I have lived, unalter'd in my love
To Sparta, and unconquer'd in my purpose.

You mean to take advantage of my state,
Without spectator, counsellor, or friend:
You think I dread the stern approach of death,
Because the blooming season of my life
Still promises a long extent of years:
But my forefathers' blood is in my veins,
The blood of heroes, and of Spartan kings,
Less only than the gods. I dare your worst,
And with my dying breath acquit my people.
The people rose; they hearken'd to the voice
Of Liberty, and blest the name of Agis.
But you, the nobles, an inglorious race,
Base as the dastard and unarmed Helots,
With foreign arms and mercenary aid,
Bore down the people and opprest your prince,
Whom death delivers. Agis shall not see
The last convulsions of expiring Freedom;
For in the first he dies.

Amph. We'll hear no more
Of these invectives.—Bear him to the place
Of execution. Officers, advance
And do your duty.

Off. This is not our duty.

Amph. What!

Off. Murder of a king is not our duty.

Amph. Mutinous slaves! for you I'll find a time.
—Sir. [*To* AGIS.

Agis. Touch me not, for uncompell'd I go
To meet my destiny. Weep not for me.
[*To an Officer.*
O! thou whose nature suits not thy employment,
Weep not for me! I would not change conditions
With these bad men. I shall not feel the woes
That thou and all must feel, the woes of Sparta!
O! might my death avail my much-loved country,
I'd die as joyful then, as fearless now.
[*Exit* AGIS, *guarded.*

Amph. Atone your insolence by prompt obedience,
Or death's your portion. [*To an Officer.*
[*Exeunt with* AGIS.

Manent AMPHARES, *&c.*

Amph. Magistrates of Sparta!
This painful work of necessary justice
Will quickly end the troubles of the state.
Leonidas, who owes his crown to you,
Your faithful zeal and service will reward.
[*Exeunt Ephori.*

Manent AMPHARES *and the Spartan who entered with* AGIS.

Amph. Haste to the Thracian captain, and require him
To send his prisoner Lysander hither.

[*Exit Spartan.*

Agis removed, and turbulent Lysander,
Like snow along the shore, their army melts.

Enter Messenger from the Dungeon.

Mess. The executioners refuse their office:
Sacred they hold the person of a king,—
A Spartan king descended from the gods.

Amph. Again those fables of the villain priests
Rise up to thwart me. Now, my trusty servant,
Approve thy faith, and win my lasting favour.
Each instant of delay is big with peril
Whilst Agis lives. Let thy good sword fulfil
The sentence of the law, and thy own tongue
Shall name the recompense.

Mess. Shall it, my lord?
I am your instrument, and bind myself
By this bold deed still faster to your fortunes.

[*Exit.*

Amph. Ye sons of bold ambition, learn of me:
Trust not the survey of another's eye:
Your dangerous voyage needs a pilot's care,
Who never quits the helm.

Enter Spartan.

Spar. We are betray'd.
Lysander——
Amph. What of him? Speak—faulter not.
Spar. Is fled.
Amph. Whither? With whom?—Eternal Gods!
Spar. The guards have set him free; the open gates
I saw, and entering search'd the empty tower.
Amph. That traitor Euxus!—Now let me resolve,
And quickly too.
Spar. The people are alarm'd,
And gather to their tribes!
Amph. Curst be their tribes!
The deed is done already. Yet I have
One pledge of value.
Spar. Agesistrata——
Amph. This hour she dies. I've sent a trusty slave

To end her woes. But the Athenian maid,
Her I'll bear off in spite of frowning fortune.
Go to the turret, and conduct her hither.

[*Exit Spartan.*

Manet AMPHARES.

Amph. Malignant powers! or blind unerring Fate,
This is your work: now you assert your empire.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My lord, the troops of Euxus have revolted.
Rhinalces visited this night each post,
And near Amycla's gate some Thracians met,
Whose leader, question'd, answer'd with his sword.

Amph. By heaven and earth, Lysander! Ha! proceed.

Mess. The sudden onset, and the cloud of night,
The traitors favour'd; some escaped our swords,
But many more in the sharp combat fell.

Amph. Did their fierce leader fall?

Mess. Above the rest
Conspicuous he fought; at him each sword

Was pointed. If he fell not on the spot,
Sure he received wounds that must fatal prove.
Amph. Confirm me that, and I will mock at fate.
Command my troops, that in the Forum watch,
To join Rhinalces. I myself will follow.
[*Exit Messenger.*

Enter EUANTHE.

How beautiful she is! Should he survive,
Those charms divine he never shall enjoy.
Euan. Why hast thou call'd me hither, to afflict
And torture me with spectacles of woe?
[*The Gate of the Prison opens, and* AMPHARES' *Slave advances.*
Eternal powers! why yawn yon dreadful gates?
And from what horrid deed stalks yonder villain?
Mess. Thy orders are obey'd. He lives no more.
Euan. Barbarian monster! hast thou kill'd Lysander?——
But I will not reproach thee, nor complain
To the regardless gods. My doom is past;
There is one only refuge for Euanthe.
Once more I follow where Lysander leads,

Where murder and Amphares cannot come
To part us more.

[*She runs towards the Dungeon.* AMPHARES *seizes her.*

Amph. Some other season choose.
There is no leisure now for lamentation.
Forthwith conduct her to the Arcadian gate:
There with the horsemen wait.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My lord, my lord,
The royal band by Thracian Euxus led—

[*Shout.*

Amph. My enemy prevails.—This way with me.
My steps pursue, or by the Gods of Hell!—

Euan. I will not leave this place. Draw forth thy sword,
And try if death can terrify despair.

Amph. Drag her along. [*Shout.*
Again!—the foe draws near.

[*Shout from the other side,* "Agis and Liberty!"

Amph. I am encompast; yet I'll mar their triumph.

[*Runs at* EUANTHE *with his sword.*

Enter LYSANDER, *followed by* RHESUS.

Lysan. Infernal dog, turn and behold Lysander!
Fly, Rhesus, to the king. Traitor accurst!
[*Exit* RHESUS.
Down, down, to Tartarus; there, villain, howl.
[AMPHARES *falls.*
Euan. Amazing powers! alive! victorious! oh!
Lysan. And have I come to save thee, O Euanthe!
But oh! I fear I come too late for Agis,
The dungeon-mouth is open.

Enter RHESUS.

Tell me, Rhesus.
Rhe. The king is murder'd, in yon vault he lies.
Lysan. My prince! my friend! thy goodness,
and thy virtue,
Thy clemency, thy mildness, have undone thee!
Fatal to nations is the dread example!
Hence monarchs, who with iron sceptre rule,
Will justify their treatment of mankind;
And virtuous princes, born in evil times,
Will hesitate to stem corruption's tide,
Lest they should be like Agis overwhelm'd.
Amph. He who preferr'd Lysander to Amphares,

Has paid me with his life. My dying hand
Hath sow'd the seeds of discord and distraction.
Peace ne'er shall dwell in Sparta. Plagues on plagues
Shall rise to curse you, as—— [*Dies.*

Lysan. Thy soul is curst.
There the fell spirit of Amphares fled
In imprecations. Prophet of disasters,
Upon the dismal banks of Acheron,
Amidst the wailing ghosts, still curse thy country,
And end a speech the damn'd will hate to hear.
Behold the mother of our murder'd king.

Enter AGESISTRATA *and* EUXUS.

Ages. Alas! I need not ask the fate of Agis:
Your looks, your silence say, I have no son!
Yet speak to me, for I can hear the worst,
I have been long familiar with affliction;
I am the widow of the sire of Agis.

Lysan. There lies the bloody author of his death,
Slain by my hand.

Ages. Alas, alas! my son!
Oft has my anxious mind this hour foreseen,
And warn'd thee oft. But thou the danger scorn'd,

When Sparta's glory was the price of peril.
O! son of Jove, great author of our race,
Sustain my soul. For he who was my stay,
My comfort and my strength, is now no more.
Yet in the path his generous spirit chose,
He fell; and conscious virtue crown'd his fall.

Lysan. So fell not false Amphares.

Euxus. And Sandane.

Lysan. Sandane dead!

Euxus. And dreadful was her death.
She fled, for refuge from the people's rage,
To the same turret where Amphares' troops
Guarded the queen, whose mantle on the ground
She spied, and wrapt it round her wretched head;
When suddenly a stern assassin came
And stabb'd her, as that queen whose robe she wore.
Arriving then, I heard her shriek for help,
Implore her country's gods with bitter cries,
And, in her agony, divulge her crimes.
It was no wonder that she fear'd to die.

Ages. O guilt! thou'rt worst of all; he knew thee not
For whom I mourn. Untimely was his fate;

Yet full of high and pleasing thoughts he fell.
Great-hearted Virtue, in its swelling hour,
Scarce feels the blow that strikes at brittle life.
The painful part is mine, in grief to live.
Would I had died for thee, my son, my son!

Euan. Euanthe's tears shall ever flow with yours,
For her protector and her gentle friend.
Mysterious are the counsels of the gods;
Together Agis and Amphares fall.

Lysan. The son of Agis lives, his infant years
Require a mother's care. Without delay
Proclaim the son of Agis king of Sparta.
To him, the offspring of my prince adored,
Descend the love and faith I bore to Agis.
Ye generous Thracians, who this day have shewn
The matchless worth and honour of your minds,
Henceforth be Spartans. And, ye Spartan youths,
Whom Agis loved, and for whose rights he died,
Display the spirit of your dear bought freedom;
With grateful valour guard the hero's son,
And prove that Agis perish'd not in vain.

Ages. Conduct me, Spartans, to his dear remains.

Lysan. Forbear a while yon dismal vault.—

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My lord,
The people, headed by the priests of Jove
And Hercules, in long procession come,
Bearing the body of their royal lord,
From that base dungeon to the sculptured tomb,
Which guards the sacred dust of Sparta's kings.

Enter the Procession with the body of AGIS.

Lysan. O Destiny supreme!

Euan. O sad remains of youth and majesty!

Ages. My son, my son!
Nature is thwarted here; thou should'st have borne
Thy aged parent to the silent tomb.

Chorus.

Mourn, ye sons of Sparta, mourn,
Pour the sad lamenting strain.
Wretched people! Land forlorn!
Mourn the best of princes slain.

Priest of JUPITER.

He fell not as the warrior falls,
Whose breast defends his native walls.

To treason Agis bow'd his head,
And by his guilty subjects bled:
Betray'd by those his mercy spared;
Ingratitude was his reward.

Chorus.

Shame is mix'd with Sparta's woe,
Blood of kings the city stains,
Ever let our sorrows flow,
Shame indelible remains.

Priests of JUPITER.

Yet Agis triumph'd in his fall;
For Virtue triumphs over all!
Great, superior to his fate,
He only grieved for Sparta's state.
When Jove decrees a nation's doom,
He calls their heroes to the tomb.
Fearless they fall, immortal rise,
And claim the freedom of the skies.

Chorus.

Agis triumph'd in his fall,
Virtue triumphs over all!

Such a king shall ne'er return:
Our country and ourselves we mourn.

Priests of HERCULES.

Agis fell, by fraud o'ercome;
Alike was great Alcides' doom:
Yet then most worthy of his sire,
The son of Jove, when wrapt in fire,
Victorious crown'd his labours past:
His noblest labour was the last.

Chorus of all.

Now in peace our hero lies.
Ceased his toil, his race is run;
Freedom is the glorious prize
Agis for his people won.

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MRS PRITCHARD.

A KING in bloom of youth, for freedom die!
Our bard, though bold, durst not have soar'd so high.
This is no credulous admiring age;
But sacred, sure, the faith of Plutarch's page.
In simple style that ancient sage relates
The tale of Sparta, chief of Grecian states:
Eight hundred years it flourish'd, great in arms,
On dangers rose, and grew amidst alarms.
Of Sparta's triumph you have heard the cause,
More strong, more noble than Lycurgus' laws;
How Spartan dames, by glory's charms inspired,
The son, the lover, and the husband fired.
Ye fair of Britain's isle, which justly claims
The Grecian title, land of lovely dames,
In Britain's cause, exert your matchless charms,
And rouse your lovers to the love of arms.
Hid, not extinct, the spark of valour lies;
Your breath shall raise it flaming to the skies.
Now Mars his bloody banner hangs in air,
And bids Britannia's sons for war prepare:
Let each loved maid, each mother bring the shield,
And arm their country's champions for the field.

Arm'd and inflamed, each British breast shall burn,
No youth unlaurel'd shall to you return.
Then shall we cease to exult at trophies won,
In glory's field, by heroes—not our own.
France yet shall tremble at the British sword,
And dread the vengeance of her ancient lord.

DOUGLAS;

A

TRAGEDY.

Non ego sum vates, sed prisci conscius ævi.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN AT LONDON.

In ancient times, when Britain's trade was arms,
And the loved music of her youth, alarms;
A god-like race sustain'd fair England's fame:
Who has not heard of gallant Percy's name?
Ay, and of Douglas? Such illustrious foes
In rival Rome and Carthage never rose!
From age to age bright shone the British fire,
And every hero was a hero's sire.
When powerful fate decreed one warrior's doom,
Up sprung the phœnix from his parent's tomb.
But whilst these generous rivals fought and fell,
These generous rivals loved each other well:
Though many a bloody field was lost and won,
Nothing in hate, in honour all was done.
When Percy, wrong'd, defied his prince or peers,
First came the Douglas with his Scottish spears;
And, when proud Douglas made his king his foe,
For Douglas, Percy bent his English bow.
Expell'd their native homes by adverse fate,
They knock'd alternate at each other's gate:
Then blazed the castle, at the midnight hour,
For him whose arms had shook its firmest tower.

This night a Douglas your protection claims;
A wife! a mother! Pity's softest names:
The story of her woes indulgent hear,
And grant your suppliant all she begs, a tear.
In confidence she begs; and hopes to find
Each English breast, like noble Percy's, kind.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN AT EDINBURGH.

In days of classic fame, when Persia's Lord
Opposed his millions to the Grecian sword,
Flourish'd the state of Athens, small her store,
Rugged her soil, and rocky was her shore,
Like Caledonia's; yet she gain'd a name
That stands unrival'd in the rolls of fame.
Such proud pre-eminence not valour gave,
(For who than Sparta's dauntless sons more brave?)
But learning, and the love of every art,
That Virgin Pallas and the Muse impart.
Above the rest the Tragic Muse admired
Each Attic breast with noblest passions fired.
In peace their poets with their heroes shared
Glory, the hero's and the bard's reward.
The Tragic Muse each glorious record kept,
And, o'er the kings she conquer'd, Athens wept.*
Here let me cease, impatient for the scene;
To you I need not praise the Tragic Queen:
Oft has this audience soft compassion shown
To woes of heroes, heroes not their own.

---

* See the Persai of Æschylus.

This night our scenes no common tear demand,
He comes, the hero of your native land !
Douglas, a name through all the world renown'd,
A name that rouses like the trumpet's sound !
Oft have your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas follow'd through the bloody strife ;
Hosts have been known at that dread time to yield
And, Douglas dead, his name hath won the field.
Listen attentive to the various tale,
Mark if the author's kindred feelings fail ;
Sway'd by alternate hopes, alternate fears,
He waits the test of your congenial tears.
If they shall flow, back to the Muse he flies,
And bids your heroes in succession rise ;
Collects the wand'ring warriors as they roam,
Douglas assures them of a welcome home.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD RANDOLPH.
GLENALVON.
OLD NORVAL.
DOUGLAS.

LADY RANDOLPH.
ANNA.

Servants, &c.

DOUGLAS.

ACT I.

SCENE,—*The Court of a Castle surrounded with Woods.*

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady Rand. YE woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewell a while: I will not leave you long;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,
Who from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears and answers to Matilda's moan.
O, Douglas, Douglas! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,

Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentation; hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn,
Who perish'd with thee on this fatal day.
To thee I lift my voice; to thee address
The plaint which mortal ear has never heard.
O disregard me not; though I am call'd
Another's now, my heart is wholly thine.
Incapable of change, affection lies
Buried, my Douglas, in thy bloody grave.—
But Randolph comes, whom fate has made my lord,
To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord Rand. Again these weeds of woe! say, dost thou well
To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
The living claim some duty; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady Rand. Silent, alas! is he for whom I mourn:
Childless, without memorial of his name,

He only now in my remembrance lives.
This fatal day stirs my time-settled sorrow—
Troubles afresh the fountain of my heart.

Lord Rand. When was it pure of sadness! These black weeds
Express the wonted colour of thy mind,
For ever dark and dismal. Seven long years
Are pass'd, since we were join'd by sacred ties:
Clouds all the while have hung upon thy brow,
Nor broke, nor parted by one gleam of joy.
Time, that wears out the trace of deepest anguish,
As the sea smooths the prints made in the sand,
Has pass'd o'er thee in vain.

Lady Rand. If time to come
Should prove as ineffectual, yet, my lord,
Thou can'st not blame me. When our Scottish youth
Vied with each other for my luckless love,
Oft I besought them, I implored them all
Not to assail me with my father's aid,
Nor blend their better destiny with mine;
For melancholy had congeal'd my blood,
And froze affection in my chilly breast.
At last my sire, roused with the base attempt
To force me from him, which thou rend'redst vain,

To his own daughter bow'd his hoary head,
Besought me to commiserate his age,
And vow'd he should not, could not, die in peace,
Unless he saw me wedded, and secured
From violence and outrage. Then, my lord!
In my extreme distress I call'd on thee,
Thee I bespake, profess'd my strong desire
To lead a single, solitary life,
And begg'd thy nobleness, not to demand
Her for a wife whose heart was dead to love.
How thou persisted'st after this, thou know'st,
And must confess that I am not unjust,
Nor more to thee than to myself injurious.

Lord Rand. That I confess; yet ever must regret
The grief I cannot cure. Would thou wert not
Composed of grief and tenderness alone,
But hadst a spark of other passions in thee,
Pride, anger, vanity, the strong desire
Of admiration, dear to woman kind;
These might contend with, and allay thy grief,
As meeting tides and currents smooth our frith.

Lady Rand. To such a cause the human mind oft owes
Its transient calm, a calm I envy not.

Lord Rand. Sure thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm:

Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For when thy brother fell, he smiled to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.

Lady Rand. Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fathers;

Implacable resentment was their crime,
And grievous has the expiation been.
Contending with the Douglas, gallant lives
Of either house were lost; my ancestors
Compell'd, at last, to leave their ancient seat
On Tiviot's pleasant banks; and now, of them
No heir is left. Had they not been so stern,
I had not been the last of all my race.

Lord Rand. Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.

I never asked of thee that ardent love,
Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns.
Decent affection and complacent kindness
Were all I wish'd for; but I wish'd in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land:
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.

Lady Rand. Thou dost not think so: woeful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither goest thou now?

Lord Rand. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell
The Danes are landed.

Lady Rand. O! may adverse winds,
Far from the coast of Scotland, drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home!

Lord Rand. Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a warrior's wish:
Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fix'd
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand!
Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal shore.

Lady Rand. War I detest: But war with foreign foes,
Whose manners, language, and whose looks are strange,
Is not so horrid, nor to me so hateful,

As that which with our neighbours oft we wage.
A river here, there an ideal line,
By fancy drawn, divides the sister kingdoms.
On each side dwells a people similar,
As twins are to each other; valiant both:
Both for their valour famous through the world.
Yet will they not unite their kindred arms,
And, if they must have war, wage distant war,
But with each other fight in cruel conflict.
Gallant in strife, and noble in their ire,
The battle is their pastime. They go forth
Gay in the morning, as to summer sport;
When ev'ning comes, the glory of the morn,
The youthful warrior, is a clod of clay.
Thus fall the prime of either hapless land;
And such the fruit of Scotch and English wars.

Lord Rand. I'll hear no more: this melody would make
A soldier drop his sword, and doff his arms,
Sit down and weep the conquests he has made;
Yea, (like a monk) sing rest and peace in heaven
To souls of warriors in his battles slain.
Lady, farewell: I leave thee not alone;
Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light.

[*Exit.*

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's love:
Urged by affection, I have thus presumed
To interrupt your solitary thoughts;
And warn you of the hours that you neglect,
And lose in sadness.

Lady Rand. So to lose my hours
Is all the use I wish to make of time.

Anna. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my state:
But sure I am, since death first prey'd on man,
Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
What had your sorrows been if you had lost,
In early youth, the husband of your heart?

Lady Rand. Oh!

Anna. Have I distress'd you with officious love,
And ill-timed mention of your brother's fate?
Forgive me, lady: humble though I am,
The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune:
So fervently I love you, that to dry
These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.

Lady Rand. What power directed thy unconscious tongue
To speak as thou hast done? to name——

Anna. I know not:
But since my words have made my mistress tremble,
I will speak so no more; but silent mix
My tears with her's.

Lady Rand. No, thou shalt not be silent.
I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth the instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it? Can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never-ebbing time?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive?

Anna. What means my noble mistress?

Lady Rand. Didst thou not ask what had my sorrows been,
If I in early youth had lost a husband?—
In the cold bosom of the earth is lodged,
Mangled with wounds, the husband of my youth;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his!

Anna. O! lady, most revered!
The tale wrapt up in your amazing words
Deign to unfold.

Lady Rand. Alas! an ancient feud,
Hereditary evil, was the source

Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed,
That my brave brother should in battle save
The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe:
The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship.
To see the vaunted sister of his friend
Impatient, Douglas to Balarmo came,
Under a borrow'd name.—My heart he gain'd;
Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd:
My brother's presence authorized our marriage.
Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of down,
Had o'er us flown, when my loved lord was call'd
To fight his father's battles; and with him,
In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go.
Scarce were they gone, when my stern sire was told
That the false stranger was Lord Douglas' son.
Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword,
And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
Kneeling beneath his sword, fault'ring, I took
An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
Wed one of Douglas' name.—Sincerity,
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path! although the earth should gape,

And from the gulph of hell destruction cry,
To take dissimulation's winding way.

Anna. Alas! how few of woman's fearful kind
Durst own a truth so hardy!

Lady Rand. The first truth
Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,
This precious moral, from my tragic tale.—
In a few days the dreadful tidings came,
That Douglas and my brother both were slain.
My lord! my life! my husband!—Mighty God!
What had I done to merit such affliction?

Anna. My dearest lady! many a tale of tears
I've listen'd to; but never did I hear
A tale so sad as this.

Lady Rand. In the first days
Of my distracting grief, I found myself—
As women wish to be who love their lords.
But who durst tell my father? The good priest
Who join'd our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
With his loved Malcolm, in the battle fell:
They two alone were privy to the marriage.
On silence and concealment I resolved,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,

My nurse, the only confidante I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house:
But nurse, nor infant, have I ever seen,
Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.
My murder'd child!—Had thy fond mother fear'd
The loss of thee, she had loud fame defied,
Despised her father's rage, her father's grief,
And wander'd with thee through the scorning world.

Anna. Not seen nor heard of! then perhaps he lives.

Lady Rand. No. It was dark December: wind and rain
Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
The destined road; and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perish'd with my child.
O hapless son! of a most hapless sire!—
But they are both at rest; and I alone
Dwell in this world of woe, condemn'd to walk,
Like a guilt-troubled ghost, my painful rounds:
Nor has despiteful fate permitted me
The comfort of a solitary sorrow.
Though dead to love, I was compell'd to wed
Randolph, who snatch'd me from a villain's arms;
And Randolph now possesses the domains,

That by Sir Malcolm's death on me devolved;
Domains, that should to Douglas' son have given
A baron's title, and a baron's power.
Such were my soothing thoughts, while I bewail'd
The slaughter'd father of a son unborn.
And when that son came, like a ray from heaven,
Which shines and disappears; alas! my child!
How long did thy fond mother grasp the hope
Of having thee, she knew not how, restored.
Year after year hath worn her hope away;
But left still undiminish'd her desire.

Anna. The hand, that spins the uneven thread of life,
May smooth the length that's yet to come of your's.

Lady Rand. Not in this world: I have consider'd well
Its various evils, and on whom they fall.
Alas! how oft does goodness wound itself,
And sweet affection prove the spring of woe!
O! had I died when my loved husband fell!
Had some good angel oped to me the book
Of Providence, and let me read my life,
My heart had broke, when I beheld the sum
Of ills, which one by one I have endured.

Anna. That God, whose ministers good angels are,
Hath shut the book in mercy to mankind.
But we must leave this theme: Glenalvon comes:
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes;
And hitherward he slowly stalks his way.

Lady Rand. I will avoid him. An ungracious person
Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

Anna. Why speaks my lady thus of Randolph's heir?

Lady Rand. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's virtues.
Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
An artificial image of himself:
And he with ease can vary to the taste
Of different men its features. Self-denied,
And master of his appetites he seems:
But his fierce nature, like a fox chain'd up,
Watches to seize unseen the wish'd-for prey.
Never were vice and virtue poised so ill,
As in Glenalvon's unrelenting mind.
Yet is he brave and politic in war,
And stands aloft in these unruly times.

Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter:
Stay and detain him till I reach the castle.

[*Exit Lady* RANDOLPH.

Anna. O happiness! where art thou to be found?
I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
Though graced with grandeur, and in wealth array'd:
Nor dost thou, it would seem, with virtue dwell;
Else had this gentle lady miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?
Like some entranced and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to heaven.

Anna. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a seer,
To have my doubts by heavenly vision clear'd!

Glen. What dost thou doubt of? what hast thou to do
With subjects intricate? thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be question'd: think of these good gifts;
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

Anna. Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty: who so fair as she?

But I must follow: this revolving day
Awakes the memory of her ancient woes.

[*Exit* ANNA.

Glen. [*Solus.*] So! Lady Randolph shuns me: by and by
I'll woo her as the lion wooes his bride.
The deed's adoing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich vallies, and a chief of power.
The season is most apt: my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has lived too long: his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down:
When I had seized the dame, by chance he came,
Rescued, and had the lady for his labour.
I 'scaped unknown: a slender consolation!
Heaven is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe:
By love, or something like it, stung, inflamed,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,
And she has threaten'd to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know:
But well I know the baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear: the man I dread
Is as a Dane to me; ay, and the man

Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire.
No bar but he; she has no kinsman near;
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold;
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy Glenalvon. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE,—*A Court, &c. as before.*

Enter Servants and a Stranger at one door, and Lady RANDOLPH *and* ANNA *at another.*

Lady Rand. What means this clamour? Stranger, speak secure;
Hast thou been wrong'd? have these rude men presumed
To vex the weary traveller on his way?

1 *Serv.* By us no stranger ever suffer'd wrong:
This man with outcry wild has call'd us forth;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH *and a Young Man, with their swords drawn and bloody.*

Lady Rand. Not vain the stranger's fears!—
How fares my lord?

Lord Rand. That it fares well, thanks to this gallant youth,

Whose valour saved me from a wretched death!—
As down the winding dale I walk'd alone,
At the cross way four armed men attack'd me:
Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp;
Who would have quickly laid Lord Randolph low,
Had not this brave and generous stranger come,
Like my good angel, in the hour of fate,
And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.
They turn'd upon him; but his active arm
Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no more,
The fiercest two; the others fled amain,
And left him master of the bloody field.
Speak, Lady Randolph: upon beauty's tongue
Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold;
Speak, noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

Lady Rand. My lord, I cannot speak what now I feel.
My heart o'erflows with gratitude to heav'n;
And to this noble youth, who, all unknown
To you and yours, deliberated not,
Nor paused at peril, but humanely brave
Fought on your side, against such fearful odds.
Have you yet learn'd of him whom we should thank?
Whom call the saviour of Lord Randolph's life?

Lord Rand. I ask'd that question, and he answered not:
But I must know who my deliverer is.
[*To the Stranger.*

Strang. A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
Who nought can boast but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord Rand. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled
By the great King of kings! thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero by the sovereign hand
Of Nature! blush not, flower of modesty,
As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

Strang. My name is Norval: on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks; a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.
For I had heard of battles, and I long'd
To follow to the field some warlike lord:
And heav'n soon granted what my sire deny'd.
This moon which rose last night, round as my shield,
Had not yet fill'd her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce barbarians, from the hills,

Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled
For safety and for succour. I alone,
With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,
Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd
The road he took, then hasten'd to my friends,
Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led,
Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumber'd foe.
We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was drawn,
An arrow from my bow had pierced their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.
Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd
The shepherd's slothful life; and having heard
That our good king had summon'd his bold peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps:—
Yon trembling coward, who forsook his master.
Journeying with this intent, I past these towers,
And, heav'n-directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord Rand. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehearsed?

My brave deliverer! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's sight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour loved.—
Ha, my Matilda! wherefore starts that tear?

Lady Rand. I cannot say: for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe; and I admire
Him and his fortunes who hath wrought thy safety;
Yea, as my mind predicts, with thine his own.
Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolved to hunt for fame, and with his sword
To gain distinction which his birth deny'd.
In this attempt unknown he might have perish'd,
And gain'd, with all his valour, but oblivion.
Now, graced by thee, his virtue serves no more
Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope
He stands conspicuous; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword.
On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working Lord of heaven.

Lord Rand. Pious and grateful ever are thy thoughts!
My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
In honour and command shall Norval be.

Norv. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
In speech and manners: never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence; yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast, which makes me bold
To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady Rand. I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou shalt be
My knight; and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valour guard the life of Randolph.

Lord Rand. Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid reply. [*To* NORVAL.
We are thy debtors still; thy high desert
O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp.
Some of my train, I see, are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their lord's delay.
Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,

Who languish for the fight, and beat the air
With brandish'd swords.

Norv. Let us begone, my lord.

Lord Rand. [*To Lady* RANDOLPH.] About
the time that the declining sun
Shall his broad orb o'er yonder hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field.—Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart who for his country fights:
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure; sweetest then,
When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

[*Exeunt* RANDOLPH *and* NORVAL.

Lady RANDOLPH *and* ANNA.

Lady Rand. His parting words have struck a
fatal truth.
O Douglas, Douglas! tender was the time
When we two parted, ne'er to meet again!
How many years of anguish and despair
Has heaven annex'd to those swift-passing hours
Of love and fondness! Then my bosom's flame,

Oft, as blown back by the rude breath of fear,
Return'd, and with redoubled ardour blazed.

Anna. May gracious heaven pour the sweet balm of peace
Into the wounds that fester in your breast!
For earthly consolation cannot cure them.

Lady Rand. One only cure can heaven itself bestow;
A grave—that bed in which the weary rest.
Wretch that I am! Alas! why am I so?
At every happy parent I repine!
How blest the mother of yon gallant Norval!
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born:
She nursed her smiling infant on her breast;
Tended the child, and rear'd the pleasing boy.
She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth
In grace and comeliness surpass his peers:
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

Anna. Alas, alas! why will you thus resume
Your grief afresh? I thought that gallant youth
Would for a while have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gazed, with a look

Much more delighted, than your pensive eye
Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady Rand. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even there mine eye
Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow.
I thought, that had the son of Douglas lived,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger,
And pair'd with him in features and in shape.
In all endowments, as in years, I deem,
My boy with blooming Norval might have number'd.
Whilst thus I mused, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee, (said I to myself)
With all my power, and grace with all my favour.

Anna. Sure heaven will bless so generous a resolve.
You must, my noble dame, exert your power:
You must awake: devices will be framed,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

Lady Rand. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will work

Against a rival in his kinsman's love,
If I deter him not: I only can.
Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.
'Tis pleasing to admire! most apt was I
To this affection in my better days;
Though now I seem to you shrunk up, retired
Within the narrow compass of my woe.
Have you not sometimes seen an early flower
Open its bud, and spread its silken leaves,
To catch sweet airs, and odours to bestow;
Then, by the keen blast nipt, pull in its leaves,
And, though still living, die to scent and beauty?
Emblem of me: affliction, like a storm,
Hath kill'd the forward blossoms of my heart.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Where is my dearest kinsman, noble Randolph?

Lady Rand. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the base——

Glen. I have: and that the villains may not 'scape,

With a strong band I have begirt the wood:
If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
And torture force from them th' important secret,
Whether some foe of Randolph hired their swords,
Or if——

Lady Rand. That care becomes a kinsman's love.—

I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear. [*Exit* ANNA.

Glen. To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady Rand. I have not found so: thou art known to me.

Glen. Known!

Lady Rand. And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

Glen. What do you know? By the most blessed cross,

You much amaze me. No created being,
Yourself except, durst thus accost Glenalvon.

Lady Rand. Is guilt so bold? and dost thou make a merit

Of thy pretended meekness? This to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto conceal'd, what, if divulged,

Would make thee nothing; or, what's worse than
that,
An outcast beggar, and unpitied too?
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.
Glen. Thy virtue awes me. First of woman-
kind!
Permit me yet to say, that the fond man
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,
If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruin'd, as in mind forlorn,
Unpity'd cannot be. Pity's the alms
Which on such beggars freely is bestow'd:
For mortals know that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still:
As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Through the dry heath before the fanning wind.
Lady Rand. Reserve these accents for some
other ear.
To love's apology I listen not.
Mark thou my words; for it is meet thou should'st:
His brave deliverer Randolph here retains.
Perhaps his presence may not please thee well;
But, at thy peril, practise aught against him:
Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake
And loosen the good root he has in Randolph;

Whose favourites I know thou hast supplanted.
Thou look'st at me, as if thou fain would'st pry
Into my heart: 'Tis open as my speech.
I give this early caution; and put on
The curb, before thy temper breaks away.
The friendless stranger my protection claims:
His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. [*Exit.*

Manet GLENALVON.

Glen. Child that I was, to start at my own shadow,
And be the shallow fool of coward conscience!
I am not what I have been; what I should be.
The darts of destiny have almost pierced
My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith
In holy legends, and religious tales,
I should conclude there was an arm above
That fought against me, and malignant turn'd,
To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.
Why, rape and murder are not simple means!
Th' imperfect rape to Randolph gave a spouse;
And the intended murder introduced
A favourite to hide the sun from me;
And, worst of all, a rival. Burning hell!
This were thy centre, if I thought she loved him!

'Tis certain she contemns me; nay, commands me,
And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,
In his behalf. And shall I thus be braved?
Curb'd, as she calls it, by dame chastity?
Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are
More fierce than hate, ambition, and revenge,
Rise up, and fill my bosom with your fires,
And policy remorseless! Chance may spoil
A single aim; but perseverance must
Prosper at last. For chance and fate are words:
Persistive wisdom is the fate of man.
Darkly a project peers upon my mind,
Like the red moon when rising in the east,
Cross'd and divided by strange-colour'd clouds.
I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,
And for his cowardice was spurned from him.
I've known a follower's rankled bosom breed
Venom most fatal to his heedless lord. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE,—*A Court, &c. as before.*

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Thy vassals, Grief! great nature's order break,
And change the noon-tide to the midnight hour.
Whilst Lady Randolph sleeps, I will walk forth,
And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.
Sweet may her slumbers be! Ye ministers
Of gracious heav'n who love the human race,
Angels and seraphs who delight in goodness,
Forsake your skies, and to her couch descend!
There from her fancy chase those dismal forms
That haunt her waking; her sad spirit charm
With images celestial, such as please
The bless'd above upon their golden beds.

Enter Servant.

Serv. One of the vile assassins is secured.
We found the villain lurking in the wood:

With dreadful imprecations he denies
All knowledge of the crime. But this is not
His first essay: these jewels were conceal'd
In the most secret places of his garment;
Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.

Anna. Let me look on them. Ha! here is a heart,
The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name!
These are no vulgar jewels.—Guard the wretch.

[*Exit* ANNA.

Enter Servants with a Prisoner.

Pris. I know no more than does the child unborn
Of what you charge me with.

1 *Serv.* You say so, sir!
But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold, the lady of Lord Randolph comes:
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH *and* ANNA.

Anna. Summon your utmost fortitude, before
You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret,
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.

Lady Rand. Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate heart,
Hear how my infant perish'd. See, he kneels.
[*The Prisoner kneels.*

Pris. Heaven bless that countenance so sweet and mild!
A judge like thee makes innocence more bold.
O save me, lady! from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seized me; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of God,
The tender lamb, that never nipt the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady Rand. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce?

1 *Serv.* We found him lurking in the hollow glen,
When view'd and call'd upon, amazed he fled.
We overtook him, and inquired from whence
And what he was: he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfied with this, we search'd his clothes,
And found these jewels, whose rich value plead
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems,

And old in villainy. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

Pris. O, gentle lady! by your lord's dear life,
Which these weak hands, I swear, did ne'er assail;
And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my grey hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady Rand. Account for these; thine own they cannot be:
For these, I say: be stedfast to the truth;
Detected falsehood is most certain death.

[ANNA *removes the Servants and returns.*

Pris. Alas! I'm sore beset! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal justice is in this most just!
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady Rand. O! Anna, hear!—Once more I charge thee speak
The truth direct: for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration;
With which, if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

Pris. Then, thus adjured, I'll speak to you as just

As if you were the minister of heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.
Some eighteen years ago, I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balarmo's lord;
But falling to decay, his servants seized
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother,)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.
A little hovel by the river's side
Received us: there hard labour, and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly lived,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof:
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, used oft to bring within
My reach whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceased; the person lost:
But, looking sad and earnest on the waters,

By the moon's light I saw, whirl'd round and round,
A basket: soon I drew it to the bank,
And nestled curious there an infant lay.

Lady Rand. Was he alive?

Pris. He was.

Lady Rand. Inhuman that thou art!
How could'st thou kill what waves and tempests spared?

Pris. I was not so inhuman.

Lady Rand. Didst thou not?

Anna. My noble mistress, you are moved too much:
This man has not the aspect of stern murder;
Let him go on, and you, I hope, will hear
Good tidings of your kinsman's long lost child.

Pris. The needy man who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the world,
Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds, as make the prosperous men
Lift up their hands, and wonder who could do them:
And such a man was I; a man declined,
Who saw no end of black adversity:

Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady Rand. Ha! dost thou say so? Then perhaps he lives!

Pris. Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady Rand. O God of heaven! Did he then die so lately?

Pris. I did not say he died; I hope he lives.
Not many days ago these eyes beheld
Him, flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady Rand. Where is he now?

Pris. Alas! I know not where.

Lady Rand. Oh, fate! I fear thee still. Thou riddler, speak
Direct and clear; else I will search thy soul.

Anna. Permit me, ever honour'd! Keen impatience,
Though hard to be restrain'd, defeats itself.—
Pursue thy story with a faithful tongue,
To the last hour that thou didst keep the child.

Pris. Fear not my faith, though I must speak my shame.
Within the cradle where the infant lay
Was stow'd a mighty store of gold and jewels;

Tempted by which, we did resolve to hide,
From all the world, this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travell'd to the north,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought forth
Our secret wealth. But God's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore:
For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness loved the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret: but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.
Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty;
And, as we oft observed, he bore himself,
Not as the offspring of our cottage blood;
For nature will break out: mild with the mild,
But with the froward he was fierce as fire,
And night and day he talk'd of war and arms.
I set myself against his warlike bent;
But all in vain: for when a desperate band
Of robbers from the savage mountains came——

Lady Rand. Eternal Providence! What is thy name?

Pris. My name is Norval; and my name he bears.

Lady Rand. 'Tis he; 'tis he himself! It is my son!

O, sovereign mercy! 'Twas my child I saw!—
No wonder, Anna, that my bosom burn'd.

Anna. Just are your transports: ne'er was woman's heart
Proved with such fierce extremes. High-fated dame!
But yet remember that you are beheld
By servile eyes; your gestures may be seen
Impassion'd, strange; perhaps your words o'erheard.

Lady Rand. Well dost thou counsel, Anna: Heaven bestow
On me that wisdom which my state requires!

Anna. The moments of deliberation pass,
And soon you must resolve. This useful man
Must be dismiss'd in safety, ere my lord
Shall with his brave deliverer return.

Pris. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judged,

Thou art the daughter of my ancient master;
The child I rescued from the flood is thine.

Lady Rand. With thee dissimulation now were vain.
I am indeed the daughter of Sir Malcolm;
The child thou rescuedst from the flood is mine.

Pris. Bless'd be the hour that made me a poor man!
My poverty hath saved my master's house!

Lady Rand. Thy words surprise me: sure thou dost not feign!
The tear stands in thine eye: such love from thee
Sir Malcolm's house deserved not; if aright
Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.

Pris. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower;
The fastest friend, the best, the kindest master:
But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
After that battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
To overlook the conduct of his servants.
By them I was thrust out, and them I blame:
May heaven so judge me as I judged my master!
And God so love me as I love his race!

Lady Rand. His race shall yet reward thee.
On thy faith
Depends the fate of thy loved master's house.
Remember'st thou a little lonely hut,
That like a holy hermitage appears
Among the cliffs of Carron?

Pris. I remember
The cottage of the cliffs.

Lady Rand. 'Tis that I mean:
There dwells a man of venerable age,
Who in my father's service spent his youth:
Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,
Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
Before the king and nobles, what thou now
To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
Shalt live in honour all thy future days;
Thy son so long shall call thee father still,
And all the land shall bless the man who saved
The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.
Remember well my words; if thou should'st meet
Him whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so;
And mention nothing of his nobler father.

Pris. Fear not that I shall mar so fair a harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe.

Why did I leave my home and ancient dame?
To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
And make him wear these jewels in his arms,
Which might, I thought, be challenged, and so bring
To light the secret of his noble birth.

[*Lady* RANDOLPH *goes towards the Servants.*

Lady Rand. This man is not the assassin you suspected,
Though chance combined some likelihoods against him.
He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal hath dragg'd him hither.

[*Exeunt Stranger and Servants.*

Lady RANDOLPH *and* ANNA.

Lady Rand. My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?
I know thou dost. Unparallel'd event!
Reaching from heaven to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatch'd from the waves, and brings to me my son!

Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father,
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift!—What does my Anna think
Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest?
How soon he gazed on bright and burning arms,
Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had thrown him,
And tower'd up to the region of his sire!

Anna. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!
Mysterious nature, with the unseen cord
Of powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady Rand. The ready story of his birth believed
Suppress my fancy quite; nor did he owe
To any likeness my so sudden favour:
But now I long to see his face again,
Examine every feature, and find out
The lineaments of Douglas, or my own.
But most of all I long to let him know
Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
And tell him all the story of his father.

Anna. With wary caution you must bear yourself
In public, lest your tenderness break forth,
And in observers stir conjectures strange.

For, if a cherub in the shape of woman
Should walk this world, yet defamation would,
Like a vile cur, bark at the angel's train.—
To-day the baron started at your tears.

Lady Rand. He did so, Anna! Well thy mistress knows
If the least circumstance, mote of offence,
Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be
With jealousy disorder'd. But the more
It does behove me instant to declare
The birth of Douglas, and assert his rights.
This night I purpose with my son to meet,
Reveal the secret, and consult with him:
For wise he is, or my fond judgment errs.
As he does now, so look'd his noble father,
Array'd in nature's ease: his mien, his speech,
Were sweetly simple, and full oft deceived
Those trivial mortals who seem always wise.
But, when the matter match'd his mighty mind,
Up rose the hero; on his piercing eye
Sat observation; on each glance of thought
Decision follow'd, as the thunderbolt
Pursues the flash.

Anna. That demon haunts you still:
Behold Glenalvon.

Lady Rand. Now I shun him not.
This day I braved him in behalf of Norval:
Perhaps too far: at least my nicer fears
For Douglas thus interpret.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Noble dame!
The hov'ring Dane at last his men hath landed:
No band of pirates; but a mighty host,
That come to settle where their valour conquers;
To win a country, or to lose themselves.

Lady Rand. But whence comes this intelligence, Glenalvon?

Glen. A nimble courier sent from yonder camp,
To hasten up the chieftains of the north,
Inform'd me, as he past, that the fierce Dane
Had on the eastern coast of Lothian landed,
Near to that place where the sea-rock immense,
Amazing Bass, looks o'er a fertile land.

Lady Rand. Then must this western army march to join
The warlike troops that guard Edina's towers.

Glen. Beyond all question. If impairing time
Has not effaced the image of a place
Once perfect in my breast, there is a wild

Which lies to westward of that mighty rock,
And seems by nature formed for the camp
Of water-wafted armies, whose chief strength
Lies in firm foot, unflank'd with warlike horse:
If martial skill directs the Danish lords,
There inaccessible their army lies
To our swift-scow'ring horse; the bloody field
Must man to man, and foot to foot, be fought.

Lady Rand. How many mothers shall bewail their sons!
How many widows weep their husbands slain!
Ye dames of Denmark! even for you I feel,
Who, sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

Glen. Oft has the unconquer'd Caledonian sword
Widow'd the north. The children of the slain
Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.
The monster war, with her infernal brood,
Loud yelling fury, and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon's soul.
Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death:
Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

Lady Rand. I scorn thee not, but when I ought to scorn;
Nor e'er reproach, but when insulted virtue

Against audacious vice asserts herself.
I own thy worth, Glenalvon; none more apt
Than I to praise thine eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.
No longer vainly feed a guilty passion;
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, Glory:
Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
And let thy valour be the shield of Randolph.

Glen. One instant stay, and hear an alter'd man.
When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash'd
Flies its own colours, and goes o'er to virtue.
I am your convert; time will shew how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth, for whom your ardent zeal to-day
Somewhat too haughtily defied your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,
And turn death from him with a guardian arm.
Sedate by use, my bosom maddens not
At the tumultuous uproar of the field.

Lady Rand. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy friend:
But that's thy least reward. Believe me, sir,
The truly generous is the truly wise;
And he, who loves not others, lives unblest.

[*Exit Lady* RANDOLPH.

Glen. [*Solus.*] Amen! and virtue is its own reward!—
I think that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
And opes the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded now, I know not:
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lull'd awhile. 'Tis her alone I fear:
Whilst she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure.
Fate o'er my head suspends disgrace and death,
By that weak hair, a peevish female's will.
I am not idle; but the ebbs and flows
Of fortune's tide cannot be calculated.
That slave of Norval's I have found most apt:
I shew'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'Twixt man and woman, which I have observed
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,

Who are, like Lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy, I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs,
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE,—*A Court, &c. as before.—Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter Lord RANDOLPH, *attended.*

Lord Rand. Summon a hundred horse, by break of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle-gate.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady Rand. Alas! my lord! I've heard unwelcome news:
The Danes are landed.

Lord Rand. Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian, bent to take a spoil:
No sportive war, no tournament essay
Of some young knight resolved to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.
The Danes are landed: we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady Rand. Dreadful times!

Lord Rand. The fenceless villages are all forsaken;
The trembling mothers, and their children, lodged
In wall-girt towers and castles; whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet, like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.

Lady Rand. Immense, as fame reports, the Danish host!

Lord Rand. Were it as numerous as loud fame reports,
An army knit like ours would pierce it through:
Brothers, that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files:
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband and the fearless father arm.
In vulgar breasts heroic ardour burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady Rand. Men's minds are temper'd, like their swords, for war;
Lovers of danger, on destruction's brink
They joy to rear erect their daring forms.
Hence, early graves; hence, the lone widow's life;
And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.—
Where is our gallant guest?

Lord Rand. Down in the vale
I left him, managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and skill
Of every rider. But behold he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.—

Enter NORVAL *and* GLENALVON.

Glenalvon! with the lark arise; go forth,
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale:
Private I travel to the royal camp:
Norval, thou goest with me. But say, young man!
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms, as I o'erheard to-day?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.
Norv. Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favours.—Hear from whence it came:
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit lived; a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains:
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,

Did they report him; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherd's alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With rev'rence and with pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell;
For he had been a soldier in his youth,
And fought in famous battles, when the peers
Of Europe, by the bold Godfredo led,
Against the usurping infidel display'd
The blessed cross, and won the Holy Land.
Pleased with my admiration, and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would shake
His years away, and act his young encounters:
Then, having shew'd his wounds, he'd sit him down,
And all the live long day discourse of war.
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
He cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts;
Described the motion, and explain'd the use
Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line,
The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
For all that Saracen or Christian knew
Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.

Lord Rand. Why did this soldier in a desert hide
Those qualities that should have graced a camp?

Norv. That too at last I learn'd. Unhappy man!
Returning homeward by Messina's port,
Loaded with wealth and honours bravely won,
A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea
Fasten'd a quarrel on him. Fierce they fought:
The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
Declared his name and lineage. Mighty power!
The soldier cried, my brother! Oh my brother!

Lady Rand. His brother!

Norv. Yes; of the same parents born;
His only brother. They exchanged forgiveness:
And happy, in my mind, was he that died;
For many deaths has the survivor suffer'd.
In the wild desart on a rock he sits,
Or on some nameless stream's untrodden banks,
And ruminates all day his dreadful fate.
At times, alas! not in his perfect mind,
Holds dialogues with his loved brother's ghost:
And oft each night forsakes his sullen couch,
To make sad orisons for him he slew.

Lady Rand. To what mysterious woes are mortals born!
In this dire tragedy, were there no more
Unhappy persons? Did the parents live?
Norv. No; they were dead: kind Heaven had closed their eyes
Before their son had shed his brother's blood.
Lord Rand. Hard is his fate; for he was not to blame!
There is a destiny in this strange world,
Which oft decrees an undeserved doom:
Let schoolmen tell us why.—From whence these sounds? [*Trumpets at a distance.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn:
The valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.
Lord Rand. Mine ancient guest? does he the warriors lead?
Has Denmark roused the brave old knight to arms?
Off. No; worn with warfare, he resigns the sword.
His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord Rand. Glenalvon, go,
With hospitality's most strong request
Entreat the chief. [*Exit* GLENALVON.

Off. My lord, requests are vain.
He urges on impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.

Lord Rand. May victory sit on the warrior's plume!
Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe;
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secured:
Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.
Such were the heroes of the ancient world;
Contemners they of indolence and gain;
But still, for love of glory and of arms,
Prone to encounter peril, and to lift
Against each strong antagonist the spear.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.
[*Exit* RANDOLPH.

Manent Lady RANDOLPH *and* NORVAL.

Lady Rand. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and pomp

Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

Norv. Ah! should they not?
Blest be the hour I left my father's house!
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand;
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady Rand. There is a gen'rous spirit in thy breast,
That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.
This way with me; under yon spreading beech,
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wondrous tale.

Norv. Let there be danger, lady, with the secret,
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,
And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life;
These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.

Lady Rand. Know'st thou these gems?

Norv. Durst I believe mine eyes,
I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady Rand. Thy father's, say'st thou? Ah! they were thy father's!

Norv. I saw them once, and curiously inquired
Of both my parents, whence such splendour came;
But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady Rand. Then learn of me, thou art not Norval's son.

Norv. Not Norval's son!

Lady Rand. Nor of a shepherd sprung.

Norv. Lady, who am I then?

Lady Rand. Noble thou art;
For noble was thy sire!

Norv. I will believe—
O, tell me farther! Say, who was my father?

Lady Rand. Douglas!

Norv. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw?

Lady Rand. His younger brother.

Norv. And in yonder camp——

Lady Rand. Alas!

Norv. You make me tremble—Sighs and tears!—
Lives my brave father?

Lady Rand. Ah! too brave indeed!
He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

Norv. Ah me, unhappy! ere I saw the light?
But does my mother live? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady Rand. She lives; but wastes her life in constant woe,
Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

Norv. You that are skill'd so well in the sad story
Of my unhappy parents, and with tears
Bewail their destiny, now have compassion
Upon the offspring of the friends you loved.
O! tell me who, and where my mother is?
Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends
Beneath the weight of other ills than grief;
And, desolate, implores of heaven the aid
Her son should give. It is, it must be so—
Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.
O, tell me her condition! Can the sword—
Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?

Lady Rand. Thy virtue ends her woes.—My son! my son!
I am thy mother, and the wife of Douglas!
[*Falls upon his neck.*

Norv. O heaven and earth, how wondrous is my fate!
Art thou my mother? Ever let me kneel!

Lady Rand. Image of Douglas! Fruit of fatal love!
All that I owe thy sire, I pay to thee.

Norv. Respect and admiration still possess me,
Checking the love and fondness of a son:
Yet I was filial to my humble parents.
But did my sire surpass the rest of men,
As thou excellest all of womankind?

Lady Rand. Arise, my son! In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admired:
The autumn of my days is come already;
For sorrow made my summer haste away.
Yet in my prime I equall'd not thy father:
His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes
Liker the dove's; and, as he pleased, he won
All hearts with softness, or with spirit awed.

Norv. How did he fall? Sure 'twas a bloody field
When Douglas died. O! I have much to ask.

Lady Rand. Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthen'd tale
Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.
At present this: Thou art the rightful heir
Of yonder castle, and the wide domains
Which now Lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.
But thou shalt not be wrong'd; I have the power

To right thee still: before the king I'll kneel,
And call Lord Douglas to protect his blood.

Norv. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.

Lady Rand. But we shall need both friends and favour, boy,
To wrest the lands and lordship from the gripe
Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think
My tale will move each gentle heart to pity;
My life incline the virtuous to believe.

Norv. To be the son of Douglas is to me
Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,
And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady Rand. Thou dost not know what perils and injustice
Await the poor man's valour. O, my son!
The noblest blood of all the land's abash'd,
Having no lackey but pale poverty.
Too long hast thou been thus attended, Douglas!
Too long hast thou been deem'd a peasant's child.
The wanton heir of some inglorious chief
Perhaps has scorn'd thee, in the youthful sports,
Whilst thy indignant spirit swell'd in vain!
Such contumely thou no more shalt bear:
But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs

Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs
That we should part before yon chiefs return.
Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand
Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,
Anxious to see thee, dictated before
This casual opportunity arose
Of private conference. Its purport mark;
For, as I there appoint, we meet again.
Leave me, my son! and frame thy manners still
To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.

Norv. I will remember. Where is Norval now,
That good old man?

Lady Rand. At hand conceal'd he lies,
An useful witness. But beware, my son,
Of yon Glenalvon; in his guilty breast
Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone
To false conjecture. He hath grieved my heart.

Norv. Has he, indeed?—Then let yon false Glenalvon
Beware of me. [*Exit* DOUGLAS.

Manet Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady Rand. There burst the smother'd flame!—
O! thou all righteous and eternal King!

Who father of the fatherless art call'd,
Protect my son! Thy inspiration, Lord!
Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,
Which in the breast of his forefathers burn'd:
Set him on high, like them, that he may shine
The star and glory of his native land!
Then let the minister of death descend,
And bear my willing spirit to its place.
Yonder they come.—How do bad women find
Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt?
When I, by reason and by justice urged,
Full hardly can dissemble with these men
In nature's pious cause?

Enter Lord RANDOLPH *and* GLENALVON.

Lord Rand. Yon gallant chief,
Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims.

Lady Rand. Be not, my lord, by his example sway'd;
Arrange the business of to-morrow now,
And, when you enter, speak of war no more.

[*Exit Lady* RANDOLPH.

Manent Lord RANDOLPH *and* GLENALVON.

Lord Rand. 'Tis so, by heaven! her mien, her voice, her eye,
And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.

Glen. He parted from her now: behind the mount,
Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord Rand. For sad sequester'd virtue she's renown'd.—

Glen. Most true, my lord.—

Lord Rand. Yet, this distinguish'd dame
Invites a youth, the acquaintance of a day,
Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.
This assignation, [*Shews a Letter,*] the assassin freed,
Her manifest affection for the youth,
Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,
Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded;
Much more in mine. Matilda never loved me.
Let no man, after me, a woman wed,
Whose heart he knows he has not; though she brings
A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry.

For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,
Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her :
She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him ;
The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames !

Glen. Yield not, my lord, to such afflicting thoughts ;
But let the spirit of a husband sleep,
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming Norval go :
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy ;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand ;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may judge
Of their behaviour.

Lord Rand. Thou dost counsel well.

Glen. Permit me now to make one slight essay.
Of all the trophies which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valour, or by wisdom won,
The first and fairest, in a young man's eye,
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind !
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-borne, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord Rand. And what avails this maxim?

Glen. Much, my lord.

Withdraw a little: I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval, by thy favour raised,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me:
But if he be the fav'rite of the fair,
Loved by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord Rand. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

Glen. When we grow loud, draw near. But let my lord
His rising wrath restrain. [*Exit* RANDOLPH.

Manet GLENALVON.

Glen. 'Tis strange, by heaven!
That she should run full tilt her fond career,
To one so little known. She too that seem'd
Pure as the winter stream, when ice emboss'd
Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts!

Enter NORVAL.

His port I love; he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd. [*Aside.*
Has Norval seen the troops?

Norv. The setting sun
With yellow radiance lighten'd all the vale;
And as the warriors moved, each polish'd helm,
Corslet or spear, glanced back his gilded beams.
The hill they climbed, and halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, towering, they seem'd
A host angelic, clad in burning arms.

Glen. Thou talk'st it well; no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

Norv. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely; since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

Glen. You wrong yourself, brave sir; your martial deeds
Have rank'd you with the great: But mark me, Norval;
Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service:

Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you:
Give them all honour; seem not to command;
Else they will scarcely brook your late-sprung power,
Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

Norv. Sir, I have been accustom'd all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth:
And though I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn,
Yet in such language I am little skill'd.
Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Although it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?

Glen. I did not mean
To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

Norv. My pride!

Glen. Suppress it as you wish to prosper:
Your pride's excessive. Yet, for Randolph's sake,
I will not leave you to its rash direction:
If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men,
Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

Norv. A shepherd's scorn!

Glen. Yes. If you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,

As if you took the measure of their minds,
And said in secret, you're no match for me!—
What will become of you?

Norv. If this were told!— [*Aside.*

Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

Glen. Ha! Dost thou threaten me?

Norv. Didst thou not hear?

Glen. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe
Had not been question'd thus. But such as thee—

Norv. Whom dost thou think me?

Glen. Norval.

Norv. So I am—
And who is Norval in Glenalvon's eyes?

Glen. A peasant's son, a wand'ring beggar-boy;
At best no more, even if he speaks the truth.

Norv. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?

Glen. Thy truth! Thou'rt all a lie; and false as hell
Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

Norv. If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bed-rid old,
Perhaps I should revile: But as I am,
I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
Is of a race who strive not but with deeds.

Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.

Glen. Dost thou know Glenalvon, born to command
Ten thousand slaves like thee!—

Norv. Villain, no more:
Draw and defend thy life. I did design
To have defy'd thee in another cause:
But heaven accelerates its vengeance on thee.
Now for my own and Lady Randolph's wrongs.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Lord Rand. Hold, I command you both. The man that stirs
Makes me his foe.

Norv. Another voice than thine
That threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.

Glen. Hear him, my lord; he's wond'rous condescending!
Mark the humility of shepherd Norval!

Norv. Now you may scoff in safety.
[*Sheaths his sword.*

Lord Rand. Speak not thus,

Taunting each other; but unfold to me
The cause of quarrel, then I judge betwixt you.

Norv. Nay, my good lord, though I revere you much,
My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
I blush to speak; I will not, cannot speak
Th' opprobrious words that I from him have borne.
To the liege-lord of my dear native land
I owe a subject's homage; but even him
And his high arbitration I'd reject.
Within my bosom reigns another lord;
Honour, sole judge and umpire of itself.
If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,
Revoke your favours, and let Norval go
Hence as he came, alone but not dishonour'd.

Lord Rand. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice:
The ancient foe of Caledonia's land
Now waves his banners o'er her frighted fields;
Suspend your purpose, till your country's arms
Repel the bold invader: then decide
The private quarrel.

Glen. I agree to this.

Norv. And I.

Enter Servant.

Serv. The banquet waits.

Lord Rand. We come. [*Exit with Servant.*

Glen. Norval,

Let not our variance mar the social hour,
Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.
Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,
Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy brow;
Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.

Norv. Think not so lightly, sir, of my resentment.
When we contend again, our strife is mortal.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE,—*The Wood.*

Enter DOUGLAS.

Doug. This is the place, the centre of the grove;
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
How sweet and solemn is this mid-night scene!
The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
Through skies where I could count each little star.
The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves;
The river rushing o'er it's pebbled bed,
Imposes silence with a stilly sound.
In such a place as this, at such an hour,
If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,
And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter OLD NORVAL.

Old Norv. 'Tis he. But what if he should chide
me hence?

His just reproach I fear.

[DOUGLAS *turns and sees him.*

Forgive, forgive!

Can'st thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir a shepherd's son?

Doug. Kneel not to me; thou art my father still:
Thy wish'd-for presence now completes my joy.
Welcome to me, my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honour'd with thy Douglas live.

Old Norv. And dost thou call me father? O my son!
I think that I could die to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime
Which in the wilderness so long conceal'd
The blossom of thy youth.

Doug. Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cot,
I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend; and, when my vassals bow,
Norval shall smooth the crested pride of Douglas.

Old Norv. Let me but live to see thine exaltation!

Yet grievous are my fears. O leave this place,
And those unfriendly towers.

Doug. Why should I leave them?

Old Norv. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek your life.

Doug. How know'st thou that?

Old Norv. I will inform you how.
When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustom'd path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I ranged,
I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds
Of earnest voices. On the persons came;
Unseen I lurk'd, and overheard them name
Each other as they talk'd, Lord Randolph this,
And that Glenalvon: still of you they spoke,
And of the lady; threat'ning was their speech,
Though but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Doug. Revenge! for what?

Old Norv. For being what you are,
Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have you offended?

When they were gone, I hied me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose.
But I could think of none: at last perplex'd,
I issued forth, encompassing the tower
With many a weary step and wishful look.
Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
The caution which I give.

Doug. I scorn it not.
My mother warn'd me of Glenalvon's baseness;
But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
In our encounter with the vile assassins,
I mark'd his brave demeanour: him I'll trust.

Old Norv. I fear you will, too far.

Doug. Here in this place,
I wait my mother's coming: she shall know
What thou hast told: her counsel I will follow;
And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
You must depart; your presence may prevent
Our interview.

Old Norv. My blessing rest upon thee!
O may heaven's hand, which saved thee from the wave,
And from the sword of foes, be near thee still;

Turning mischance, if aught hangs o'er thy head,
All upon mine! [*Exit* OLD NORVAL.

Doug. He loves me like a parent;
And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves,
Although his son has found a nobler father.—
Eventful day! how hast thou changed my state!
Once on the cold and winter-shaded side
Of a bleak hill mischance had rooted me,
Never to thrive, child of another soil:
Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.
Ye glorious stars! high heaven's resplendent host!
To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
Hear and record my soul's unalter'd wish!
Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd!
May heaven inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
To give a bold defiance to our host!
Before he speaks it out I will accept;
Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH.

Lady Rand. My son! I heard a voice——
Doug. ——The voice was mine.
Lady Rand. Didst thou complain aloud to
Nature's ear,

That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,
By stealth the mother and the son should meet?
[*Embracing him.*

Doug. No; on this happy day, this better birth-day,
My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.

Lady Rand. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy.
Now hear what I advise.

Doug. First, let me tell
What may the tenor of your counsel change.

Lady Rand. My heart forebodes some evil!

Doug. 'Tis not good.—
At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
The good old Norval in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation; oft they mention'd me
With dreadful threat'nings; you they sometimes named.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Lady Rand. Defend us, gracious God! we are betray'd:
They have found out the secret of thy birth;
It must be so. That is the great discovery.

Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own;
And they will be revenged. Perhaps even now,
Arm'd and prepared for murder, they but wait
A darker and more silent hour, to break
Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
This moment, this, heaven hath ordain'd to save thee!
Fly to the camp, my son!

Doug. And leave you here?
No: to the castle let us go together,
Call up the ancient servants of your house,
Who in their youth did eat your father's bread;
Then tell them loudly that I am your son.
If in the breasts of men one spark remains
Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,
Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few
To drive those spoilers from my father's house.

Lady Rand. O Nature, Nature! what can check thy force?—
Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!
But rush not on destruction: save thyself,
And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.
Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.
That winding path conducts thee to the river.

Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way,
Which running eastward leads thee to the camp.
Instant demand admittance to Lord Douglas.
Shew him these jewels which his brother wore.
Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth,
Which I by certain proof will soon confirm.

Doug. I yield me, and obey: but yet my heart
Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay,
And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
Of wond'rous deeds by one bold arm achieved.
Our foes are two; no more: let me go forth,
And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.

Lady Rand. If thou regard'st thy mother, or reverest
Thy father's mem'ry, think of this no more.
One thing I have to say before we part;
Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,
In a most fearful season. War and battle
I have great cause to dread. Too well I see
Which way the current of thy temper sets:
To-day I've found thee. Oh! my long-lost hope!
If thou to giddy valour givest the rein,
To-morrow I may lose my son for ever.
The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,

Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.
If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
In this waste world! My son, remember me!

Doug. What shall I say? how can I give you comfort?

The God of battles of my life dispose
As may be best for you; for whose dear sake
I will not bear myself as I resolved.
But yet consider, as no vulgar name
That which I boast sounds amongst martial men,
How will inglorious caution suit my claim?
The post of fate unshrinking I maintain:
My country's foes must witness who I am.
On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,
Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,
Who, if he lives not honour'd, must not live.

Lady Rand. I will not utter what my bosom feels.

Too well I love that valour which I warn.
Farewell, my son! my counsels are but vain;

[*Embracing.*

And as high Heaven hath will'd it, all must be.

[*They are about to separate.*

Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the path ;
I'll point it out again.

[*Just as they are separating, enter from the Wood Lord* RANDOLPH *and* GLENALVON.

Lord Rand. Not in her presence.

[*Exeunt, at different sides,* DOUGLAS *and Lady* RANDOLPH.

Now——

Glen. I'm prepared.

Lord Rand. No ; I command thee stay.
I go alone : it never shall be said
That I took odds to combat mortal man.
The noblest vengeance is the most complete.

[*Exit Lord* RANDOLPH.

[GLENALVON *makes some steps to the same side of the stage, listens and speaks.*

Glen. Demons of death, come, settle on my sword,
And to a double slaughter guide it home !
The lover and the husband both must die.

[*Lord* RANDOLPH *behind the scenes.*

Lord Rand. Draw, villain ! draw.

Doug. Assail me not, Lord Randolph !
Not, as thou lovest thyself. [*Clashing of swords.*

Glen. Now is the time. [*Running out.*

Enter Lady RANDOLPH *at the opposite side of the stage, faint and breathless.*

Lady Rand. Lord Randolph, hear me; all shall be thine own:
But spare! Oh spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS, *with a sword in each hand.*

Doug. My mother's voice!
I can protect thee still.
Lady Rand. He lives, he lives!
For this, for this to Heaven eternal praise!
But sure I saw thee fall.
Doug. It was Glenalvon.
Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,
The villain came behind me; but I slew him.
Lady Rand. Behind thee! Ah, thou'rt wounded! O my child,
How pale thou look'st! And shall I lose thee now?
Doug. Do not despair: I feel a little faintness;
I hope it will not last. [*Leans upon his sword.*
Lady Rand. There is no hope!

And we must part! the hand of death is on thee!
O my beloved child! O Douglas, Douglas!

[DOUGLAS *growing more and more faint.*

Doug. Too soon we part; I have not long been Douglas.
O destiny! hardly thou deal'st with me:
Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,
In low and poor obscurity I lived.

Lady Rand. Has heaven preserved thee for an end like this?

Doug. O had I fall'n as my brave fathers fell,
Turning with effort great the tide of battle!
Like them I should have smiled and welcom'd death.
But thus to perish by a villain's hand!
Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
Which never mortal was so fond to run.

Lady Rand. Hear, justice! hear! stretch thine avenging arm. [DOUGLAS *falls.*

Doug. Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak of me.
Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
May yet conjecture what I might have proved,
And think life only wanting to my fame:
But who shall comfort thee?

Lady Rand. Despair! despair!

Doug. O, had it pleased high Heaven to let me live
A little while!—My eyes that gaze on thee
Grow dim apace! my mother!—O, my mother!
[*Dies.*

Enter Lord RANDOLPH *and* ANNA.

Lord Rand. Thy words, the words of truth, have pierced my heart.
I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.
Oh! if my brave deliverer survives
The traitor's sword——

Anna. Alas! look there, my lord.

Lord Rand. The mother and her son! How curst I am!
Was I the cause? No: I was not the cause.
Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul
To frantic jealousy.

Anna. My lady lives:
The agony of grief hath but supprest
A while her powers.

Lord Rand. But my deliverer's dead!
The world did once esteem Lord Randolph well;
Sincere of heart, for spotless honour famed:

And in my early days, glory I gain'd
Beneath the holy banner of the cross.
Now past the noon of life, shame comes upon me;
Reproach, and infamy, and public hate,
Are near at hand; for all mankind will think
That Randolph basely stabb'd Sir Malcolm's heir.
[*Lady* RANDOLPH *recovering.*

Lady Rand. Where am I now? still in this wretched world!
Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.
My youth was worn in anguish; but youth's strength,
With hope's assistance, bore the brunt of sorrow,
And train'd me on to be the object, now,
On which Omnipotence displays itself,
Making a spectacle, a tale of me,
To awe its vassal, man.

Lord Rand. O misery!
Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim
My innocence.

Lady Rand. Thy innocence!

Lord Rand. My guilt
Is innocence, compared with what thou think'st it.

Lady Rand. Of thee I think not: what have I to do

With thee, or any thing? My son! my son!
My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I
Of thee, and of thy valour! My fond heart
O'erflow'd this day with transport, when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine,
Who might make up to me their father's child-
hood,
And bear my brother's and my husband's name:
Now all my hopes are dead! A little while
Was I a wife! a mother not so long!
What am I now?—I know—But I shall be
That only whilst I please; for such a son
And such a husband drive me to my fate.

[*Runs out.*

Lord Rand. Follow her, Anna: I myself would
follow,
But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[*Exit* ANNA.

Enter Old NORVAL.

Old Norv. I hear the voice of woe; heaven
guard my child!

Lord Rand. Already is the idle gaping crowd,
The spiteful vulgar, come to gaze on Randolph?
Begone!

Old Norv. I fear thee not. I will not go.
Here I'll remain. I'm an accomplice, lord,
With thee in murder. Yes, my sins did help
To crush down to the ground this lovely plant.
O noblest youth that ever yet was born!
Sweetest and best, gentlest and bravest spirit,
That ever bless'd the world! Wretch that I am,
Who saw that noble spirit swell and rise
Above the narrow limits that confined it,
Yet never was by all thy virtues won
To do thee justice, and reveal the secret,
Which, timely known, had raised thee far above
The villain's snare! Oh! I am punish'd now!
These are the hairs that should have strew'd the ground,
And not the locks of Douglas.

[*Tears his hair, and throws himself upon the body of* DOUGLAS.

Lord Rand. I know thee now: thy boldness I forgive;
My crest is fall'n. For thee I will appoint
A place of rest, if grief will let thee rest.
I will reward, although I cannot punish.
Curst, curst Glenalvon, he escaped too well,
Though slain and baffled by the hand he hated.

Foaming with rage and fury to the last,
Cursing his conqueror the felon died.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. My lord! my lord!

Lord Rand. Speak: I can hear of horror.

Anna. Horror indeed!

Lord Rand. Matilda?——

Anna. Is no more.

She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,
Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd,
Beneath whose low'ring top the river falls,
Ingulph'd in rifted rocks: thither she came,
As fearless as the eagle lights upon it,
And headlong down——

Lord Rand. 'Twas I! alas! 'twas I
That fill'd her breast with fury; drove her down
The precipice of death! Wretch that I am!

Anna. O had you seen her last despairing look!
Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
Down on the deep: then lifting up her head
And her white hands to heaven, seeming to say,
Why am I forced to this? she plunged herself
Into the empty air.

Lord Rand. I will not vent,
In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.
Peace in this world I never can enjoy.
These wounds the gratitude of Randolph gave.
They speak aloud, and with the voice of fate
Denounce my doom. I am resolved. I'll go
Straight to the battle, where the man that makes
Me turn aside, must threaten worse than death.—
Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,
Full warrant of my power. Let every rite
With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait:
For Randolph hopes he never shall return.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

An epilogue I ask'd; but not one word
Our bard will write. He vows 'tis most absurd
With comic wit to contradict the strain
Of tragedy, and make your sorrows vain.
Sadly he says, that pity is the best,
The noblest passion of the human breast:
For when its sacred streams the heart o'erflow,
In gushes pleasure with the tide of woe;
And when its waves retire, like those of Nile,
They leave behind them such a golden soil,
That there the virtues without culture grow,
There the sweet blossoms of affection blow.
These were his words:—void of delusive art
I felt them; for he spoke them from his heart.
Nor will I now attempt, with witty folly,
To chase away celestial melancholy.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne and Co.

Y19
WR
92.245

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
University of California, San Diego

DATE DUE

FEB 10 1984
FEB 18 1984

CI 39 UCSD Libr.